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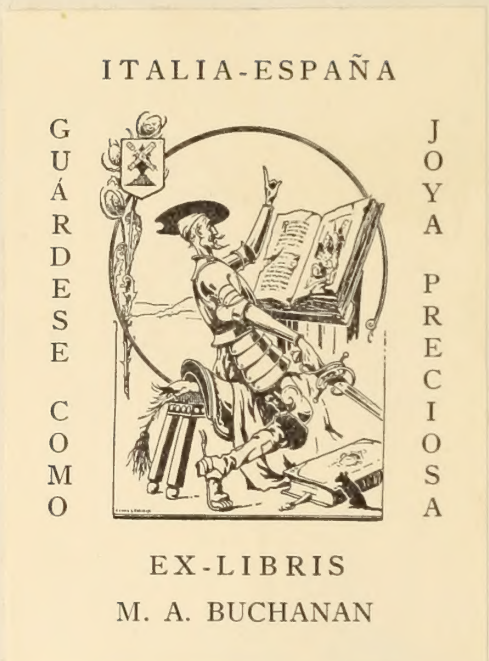
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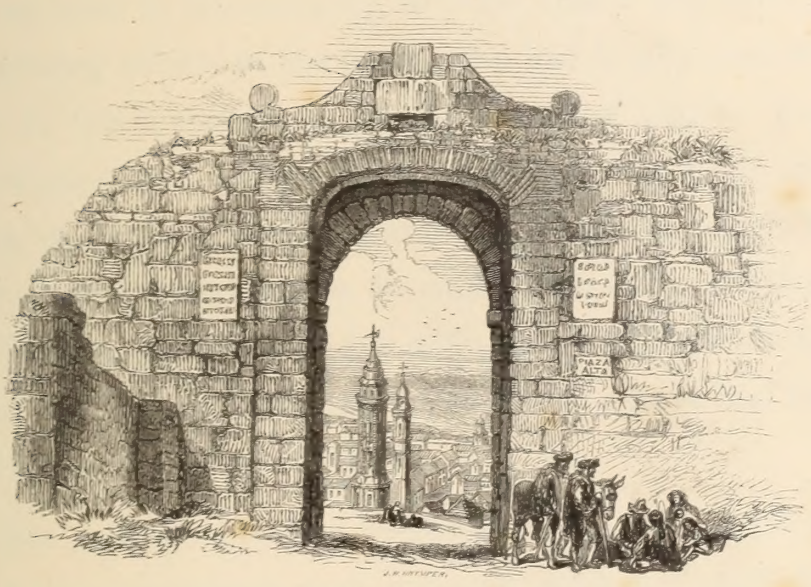
CASTILE AND ANDALUCIA.

CASTILE

AND ANDALUCIA.

BY LADY LOUISA TENISON.

¡ Cuan solitaria la nacion que un dia
Poblara immensa gente !
¡ La nacion cuyo imperio se estendia
Del Ocaso al Oriente !
Lágrimas viertes, infeliz ahora,
Soberana del mundo,
¡ Y nadie de tu faz encantadora
Borra el dolor profundo !—ESPRONCEDA.



Arco de los Gigantes, Antequera.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY,
Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.
M.D.CCC.LIII.

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PREFACE.

It may appear almost superfluous that a preface should accompany a work like the present, but I must be excused in this instance, in order that I may render a passing tribute to the artist, who has kindly assisted me in the illustrations of the following pages. The landscape and architectural drawings are from my own sketches, but the figures are from the pencil of Mr. Egron Lundgren, a Swedish Artist now residing in Seville, whose admirable delineations of Spanish life and customs are well known to those who have had the pleasure of visiting his studio.

The reader will find in these pages the results of passing observations made during a two years' residence in the country. I have endeavoured to give a faithful description of the present state of Spain, a country for which I have always entertained feelings of peculiar interest, and of which I shall carry away many

pleasing recollections, of happy days spent beneath its sunny sky.

No books have been consulted in the preparation of this work, beyond the local histories of the various cities which we visited, and some of the Spanish historians: indeed, I had but few at my command. Under the disadvantages of being absent from England during the progress of this book through the press, I should have had even more diffidence in presenting it to the public, had it not been for the assistance of two or three kind friends, to whom I can hardly sufficiently express my thanks.

Seville, *May*, 1853.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The whole of the Illustrations which accompany this Volume (from original drawings by Lady Louisa Tenison and Mr. Egron Lundgren) have been executed under the superintendence of that distinguished artist, Mr. John F. Lewis.

New Bullington Street.
July 16, 1853.

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WOMEN AT CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

Un tiempo España fué; cien héroes fueron
En tiempos de ventura,
Y las naciones timidas la vieron
Vistosa en hermosura
  Cual cedro que in Libano se ostenta,
Su frente se elevaba;
Como el trueno a la virgen amedrenta
Su voz las asterraba.
  Mas ora, como piedra en el desierto
Yaces desamparada .....

ESPRONCEDA.

DEPARTURE FROM GIBRALTAR—REFLECTIONS ON ENTERING SPAIN—MÁLAGA, PAST AND PRESENT—HOTELS—ACCOMMODATION—THE ALAMEDA—THE MANTILLA—OVERRATED BEAUTY OF THE WOMEN—THE THEATRE—THE CATHÉDRAL—THE CORO AND ITS EFFECT—WOMEN AT CHURCH—DEVOTION—THE CEMETERY—ALL-SOULS' DAY—MOORISH ARCH—THE FRUIT MARKET—THE RIVER—FATE OF TORRIJOS—FORMER SIEGE—PROTESTANT CEMETERY—CHRISTMAS—NACIMIENTOS—MIDNIGHT MASS—ST. ANTHONY'S DAY—RIDES AROUND MÁLAGA—ROBBERS—SCENERY—MÁLAGA FROM THE ERMITAS—AQUEDUCTS—CERRO DE SN. ANTON.

It was a glorious evening in the beginning of October 1850, when we found ourselves steaming out of the Bay of Gibraltar on our way to Málaga, where we

were going to remain the winter. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the night. There was not a ripple on the sea; and as the steamer dashed along, the waters around sparkled with phosphorescent light, and millions of fire-flies seemed to be dancing amid the white foam which rose about us. There was no moon; but the stars were shining with the most intense brilliancy, standing out in the deep dark sky, and shedding so clear a light, that we could distinguish the grand outline not only of the rock itself, but of the range of lofty mountains stretching far away towards Tarifa, and marking on our left the long line of the Spanish coast whose soil we were about to visit for the first time.

No one can approach Spain without feelings of the deepest interest, different indeed from those which animate the traveller on first seeing the more classic shores of Greece or Italy, but still of a character which awakens many a stirring thought and cherished recollection. She has filled a great page in the World's History. The very darkness of her infancy is not in common with that of other countries. It embraces a period and events in which perhaps is to be found the surest clue to the earliest colonisation of the west of Europe and whatever of arts and of civilisation it may have then possessed. She, too, as well as other lands, had her fields laid waste by civil war and invasion; but in every phase of her story there is an interest peculiar to herself. Subject, in turn, to Carthage and to Rome; then conquered by the Goths, whose power fell to pieces on the banks of the Guadalete, she was laid low at the foot of the Moslem, until the germ of a new dynasty sprang up in the fastnesses of the Asturias. Divided into many kingdoms, almost incessantly at war with each other, her energies became

gradually concentrated on the one great object, that of rescuing her soil from its Mahommedan rulers.

Animated by religious enthusiasm, the untiring efforts of more than seven hundred years were at length crowned with success ; and the triumph of the cross was rewarded with the discovery of a new world and a boundless empire. Rapidly rising to the highest pinnacle of greatness, the first among the nations in chivalrous renown, in military power, in wealth and commerce, she dazzled the world with her glories for a season, only to render more visible the darkness that has shrouded her since. Even in our own times, though her plains have been the battle fields on which the destinies of Europe have been partly decided, she is but little known and little visited ; yet, proud even in her fall, she seems content that the stranger should pass her by unheeded, without lifting the veil which conceals her corruption and decay. Spain has been ever the favoured land of Romance ; and some of her greatest heroes live but in the wild verses of her ballads. There is still a charm in this land of by-gone chivalry, which lingers about it, even after a long residence in the country and an acquaintance with the sad realities of its present state, have gone far to dispel the dreams in which imagination had so long indulged.

Our steamer was very comfortable—one of those Spanish vessels which run from Cadiz to Marseilles, stopping at all the intermediate ports. They regulate their progress so as to arrive during the morning or early in the day, at the several points they visit, where they remain some hours ; thus affording the tourist a most delightful though rapid view of the southern and eastern shores of the Peninsula. We were on deck before sunrise, anxious to have the first view of our destination.

The sun was rising out of the waters as we approached, gilding the whole range of mountains, at the foot of which Málaga appeared with its famous fortress, the Gibralfaro towering to the right, and its lofty Cathedral elevated high above the surrounding buildings. From the sea the town appears small: the Cathedral seeming to form the principal portion. As we approached, it being some gala day, the guns from the fortress began firing; and no great effort of imagination was required to picture Málaga as it lay during its memorable siege; to conjure up the past, and see the Christian army encamped around—the low plain which stretches out to the left, and the surrounding hills covered with Castilian troops—the ensign of the cross floating over the tent of Ferdinand and Isabella—the blue waters whitened with sails bearing supplies to the camp of the besiegers—while the inhabitants of the town looked in vain for relief to the distant shores of Africa; their sacred banner still waving from the heights of the Gibralfaro. But a nearer approach soon destroyed the illusion—the Málaga before which the Catholic Sovereigns lay encamped suddenly vanished, and we saw before us the Málaga of the nineteenth century, flanked on each side by the tall chimneys of its iron-works, more befitting the neighbourhood of Liverpool or Glasgow than the sunny clime of Andalucia. But unpoetical and discordant with the scene around, as such erections may appear, it is upon them that the eye ultimately rests with greatest satisfaction, glad to see, that amid the lethargy that is so widely prevalent, there is still a sign of life and health and hope for the future.

The dreams of the past, first dispelled by the sight of the tall chimneys of the Heredias iron-works, were thoroughly banished when we cast anchor in the port:

and we landed, in no very romantic mood, amid the whirl and confusion of Custom House officers examining the luggage, of porters seizing it in every direction, and of importunate people from the different hotels, each recommending his own with all the energy and vehement gesticulations generally displayed on such occasions by the excitable inhabitants of the south.

We walked up to the hotel on the Alameda, now the great resort of all the English, and certainly it is far superior to the general class of Spanish hotels, although wanting a great deal to make it equal to similar establishments in other continental countries. The house is one of the handsomest on the Alameda. We found the prices for our party very high, and went to look over some of the other hotels, but the little we saw of them convinced us we had better remain where we first took up our quarters. We made accordingly an agreement with the landlord, and engaged our rooms for the winter. I cannot say that to English ideas they presented much appearance of comfort, the scanty furniture consisting of nothing more than a sofa, a table, and a few chairs: the absence of carpets and of curtains to the windows did not impress one very highly with the arrangements of the much vaunted English hotel at Málaga. However, we soon became accustomed to it, and resigned ourselves to what could not be avoided. The impossibility of getting furnished houses or apartments in towns in Spain is a very serious disadvantage to families spending the winter in that country, being driven either to remain in the hotels, where the charges are high in proportion to the comforts they afford, or else obliged to take unfurnished rooms and buy the furniture—the latter an unprofitable speculation for families intending to remain but a few months in a place; for in Spain, even more than

elsewhere, it is difficult to find purchasers just at the moment you would wish to meet with them. The hotel in which we resided is situated upon the north side of the Alameda or public walk, and has the full benefit of the sun during the winter—a great advantage to invalids. They only can tell the comfort of having rooms facing the sun, who have lived much during the winter in southern climates, where there is a total absence of fire-places or stoves, and where the houses are so badly prepared against cold, that it is impossible to find either a door or a window which closes properly. When we arrived, the apartments were rather too warm, for the heat in October was excessive ; but we soon found the advantage of the position, when the winter really commenced.

The Alameda is a fine long promenade, with four rows of acacias forming three avenues, the centre and broadest of all being reserved for pedestrians. Had it been along the sea shore, like the Chiaja at Naples, it would be beautiful ; but as it is, the effect is quite destroyed from its being shut in from the sea and enclosed by two rows of houses. At times, the dust there is almost intolerable ; but nevertheless it is the only promenade Málaga possesses, and as such, is the place where all the world walk up and down, to see and be seen. There is a very pretty marble fountain at one end ; but the absence of shade—for acacias are not of much utility in affording shelter from the sun—and the want of flowers, which abound in the Alamedas of other towns, render it very commonplace.

Here, on fête days, in particular, the stranger may see the inhabitants promenading in their gayest dresses. Such a variety of colours meet and dazzle the eye as to make him at once conclude that whatever attractive qualities Spanish women may possess, taste in dress

cannot be considered among them. The most striking novelty on first landing in Spain is the mantilla, or black veil, which is generally worn, although here and there bonnets are creeping in, and Spanish women are sacrificing the only becoming peculiarity they have left in order to imitate the fashions of their neighbours. There is an elegance and a dressy appearance about the mantilla which create surprise at its not having been adopted by other nations; and if Spaniards could only be made to feel how unbecoming bonnets are to them, the rich masses of whose splendid hair prevent the bonnet being properly worn, they would cherish the mantilla as conferring on them a peculiar charm in which they are safe to fear no rivals.

I know that I shall be accused of insensibility and want of taste, when I confess that my first disappointment on landing in Spain was the almost total absence of beauty amongst the Spanish women. Poets have sung of Spain's "dark glancing daughters," and travellers have wandered through the country, with minds so deeply impressed with the preconceived idea of the beauty of the women, that they have found them all their imaginations so fondly pictured, and in their works have fostered, what I cannot help maintaining, is a mere delusion; one of the many in which people still indulge when they think and dream of Spain. The women of Spain have magnificent eyes, beautiful hair, and generally fine teeth; but more than that cannot be said by those who are content to give an honest and candid opinion. I have rarely seen one whose features could be called strictly beautiful, and that bewitching grace and fascination about their figures and their walk which they formerly possessed, have disappeared with the high comb which supported the mantilla, and the narrow basquiña, which gave a peculiar character

to their walk. With the change in their costume, those distinctive charms have vanished. The gaudy colours which now prevail have destroyed the elegance that always accompanies black, in which alone, some years since, a lady could appear in public. No further proof of this is required than to see the same people at church, where black is still considered indispensable, and on the Alameda with red dresses and yellow shawls, or some colours equally gaudy and combined with as little regard to taste. The men have likewise abandoned the cloak, and now appear in paletots and every variety of foreign invention: nor have they either gained by their sacrifices at the altar of French fashion. By no means distinguished in figure, none needed more the rich folds of the capa to lend them that air of grace and dignity which it peculiarly possesses. Although I have not yet discovered the beauty of Spanish women, I must say that the Malaguenians are fairly entitled, in all that does exist, to dispute the palm with the inhabitants of any other town we have visited. There are some very pretty faces and very characteristic of the Spanish countenance. They are generally very dark, and almost all have that peculiar projecting brow which gives to the face quite a character of its own. The women have a universal custom of putting fresh flowers in their hair. It strikes one much, upon first arriving, to see those of every class, even the poorest, with some flower or another most gracefully placed in their rich black hair, the beauty of which is not a little enhanced by the bright red rose, or snowy jasmine contrasting so well with their raven tresses. The hair is generally worn plain, curls being seldom seen, for they do not suit the mantilla; and if flowers cannot be procured, some bright ribbon is invariably worn as a substitute. The love of brilliant

and showy colours, appearing to form a ruling passion in the present day, offers a singular contrast to the fashion of twenty years ago, when a lady who would have ventured into the street dressed in anything but black would have been mobbed and insulted by the people. As it is, the lower orders are not very tolerant of customs and habits which differ from their own standard, and are in the habit of giving vent to their opinions of strangers, who go about their towns, in terms sometimes most complimentary, but oftener just the reverse, especially when they happen to have anything about their dress which displeases the critical eye, or excites the merriment of the lively Andalucian. The people, however, are fast following in the steps of the upper classes, and abandoning their rich and picturesque dresses. In short, in many ways, Spaniards are losing those peculiarities which have invested their land with a certain poetical charm, and are adopting many of the trivial commonplaces of other countries, which, to a passing observer, may seem to indicate an advancement in civilisation; but alas! they make but little progress in those more sterling and intellectual qualities, and those industrial pursuits, which would enable Spain once more to assume that place which the natural advantages of her soil and position would qualify her to hold among the nations of the present day.

Our first visit to the theatre at Málaga confirmed my impressions of the exaggerated accounts generally given of Spanish beauty. All the best people were there, but only two or three very pretty faces were to be seen in the boxes. The pit, divided into seats, each having its own number, is wholly appropriated to gentlemen. When first we arrived, the Alcalde or one of the Ayuntamiento always presided in the centre over the royal box; but this practice has been discontinued

lately, and the audience may now indulge in their applause or disapprobation unrestrained. There was an Italian company—of course a very indifferent one. They acted on alternate nights with the Spanish performers ; but we generally went on the evenings the latter gave their representations, the Spanish pieces offering to us a greater attraction than Italian Operas by inferior singers. One of the pieces, which had the greatest run, was a Spanish comic opera, called the Tio Caniytas, which has taken immensely the last two years. An unhappy Englishman is the hero of the play, and his endeavours to cultivate the society of a youthful gipsy, in order to acquire with more facility the Gitano language, afford the Spaniards a good opportunity of turning our countrymen into ridicule ; and he is victimised in turn by the old uncle and by the lover of his dark instructress. There are some very pretty airs introduced, and a characteristic dance called the Vito. It is amusing to a stranger from the costume and the plot. Being partly in the Andalucian and partly in the Gitano dialect, it is rather incomprehensible to any one who has not been some time in the country. Some of the lighter Spanish pieces are very attractive ; but their tragedies, however well they may read, are indeed formidable on the stage, as they contain very long speeches and very little action.

While we were at Málaga, they brought out a piece called the Mercado de Londres (the London Market), illustrating the adventures of a Spaniard in London. The incidents were not very flattering to our national pride, as the story turned on the interesting subject of a man selling his wife—an event which they seem to imagine is of the commonest occurrence in *"soberbia Albion."*

The district of Málaga was formed into a bishopric

and made suffragan to the see of Seville, in 1488. Pope Innocent VIII. had issued a bull, authorising the Grand Cardinal Mendoza to erect churches wherever he might think fit in the cities gained from the Moors. The cathedral was commenced in 1522 : and its design is by some ascribed to Diego de Siloe. The façade cannot boast of much architectural beauty ; it is flanked by two towers — one completed, the other not yet raised above the façade, remaining, like all cathedrals in Spain, unfinished. Of the time of Philip II., it offers nothing remarkable either in the interior or exterior ; the latter is, however, decorated with some rich marbles. The existence of these, which had been covered over with plaster and whitewash, was hardly known, until a few years ago, when one of the richest merchants in Málaga, a British subject, undertook to clean the façade at his own expense, preparatory to the first visit of the Infanta and the Duke de Montpensier.

The effect of all the cathedrals I have yet seen in Spain is destroyed by the plan of having the choir in the centre of the church, facing the high altar, instead of behind it. It prevents the eye taking in the whole of the edifice, chokes up the nave and renders it impossible to obtain a view of the high altar, unless sideways from the aisles. No beauty of execution in the choir itself can atone for the manner in which it mars the general effect of the whole building : it also seems to interfere with the due observance of public worship, for the frequent processions of priests and acolytes, to and from the bishop's throne, which is situated in the choir, serve only to distract the attention which should solely be devoted to the altar.

The crowds of women, all in black, form a very striking feature on first entering the Spanish churches.

They all kneel, or sit on the floor with their feet gathered under them, and fill up every pause in the service with the fluttering of their fans. There are not any seats, consequently all must stand or adopt a similar alternative. However fatiguing to those unaccustomed to it, the effect is pleasing ; for instead of the noise and confusion that seats more or less occasion, a change of attitude is only indicated by a gentle wavy motion as they change from one position to the other : besides, the religious impression it produces, that *there* there is no exclusiveness — the rich and the poor, the humble and the great, find themselves all placed upon the same equality.

The men—such of them as do attend, and they are not many—appear to go there more for form than anything else. They rarely use a book, and never kneel, except for a few moments, during the elevation. Indeed, a Spanish church, and a Spanish congregation of the present day, leave on the stranger's mind anything but a favourable impression of the religious condition of the country.

We were most painfully struck with the apparent indifference to these things when we joined the crowd which thronged to the cemetery on All Souls' day, a day ostensibly set apart for praying at the tombs of their deceased relatives. It appeared far more like a festive promenade, where all had met to enjoy each other's society and talk and amuse themselves. All who went, it is true, were in mourning ; but their countenances but little accorded with the sombre garb they had assumed, and, with some few exceptions, was the only evidence of sorrow to be seen.

The cemetery is prettily situated on a knoll outside the town, surrounded by immense walls, some seven feet in thickness. These are all perforated with niches,

in which the coffins are placed in regular rows, and then walled up, with the inscriptions let into the face of the wall. Some are buried in the ground within the enclosure, and there are several very handsome monuments. A magnificent chapel marks the burial-place of the Heredias, one of the wealthiest families in Málaga. On All Souls' day the tombs are lighted up, and hundreds of candles placed in every direction against the walls and over the monuments, which are covered with fresh flowers and wreaths of everlastings, the pious or formal offerings of surviving friends. There were some, indeed, who were weeping over the graves of those who had been dear to them ; but the vast majority walked round and round, utterly heedless of the ostensible object for which they had assembled ; or perhaps, if they did heave a passing sigh, at the sight of some well-known name, it was soon forgotten in the all-engrossing conversation of the living. Spaniards must have a strange power of abstracting their minds for a moment from things around them, and returning to them again ; or else their prayers must be merely on the lips, for it is quite extraordinary how they will pause, in the middle of a prayer, to make some commonplace observation, and then continue their devotions, as if the remark had been a mere parenthesis. Even the beggars will come and kneel down by your side in church, and beg and pray alternately in the most singular manner. But, whatever be the class, whether rich or poor, there seem to prevail, generally, an apathy and indifference in everything connected with religion, which indicate the sad, but inevitable reaction, to be looked for after a system in which intolerance was confounded with piety, and the essence of religion with its mere forms.

The sea formerly covered the space on which the

Alameda is now built; and even further inland may be seen a fine horse-shoe arch, which was formerly the entrance to the Moorish arsenal. The present harbour was commenced in the reign of Philip II. The fruit market is held close to the hotel, and presents a very gay appearance from the glowing and brilliant colours of the fruits and vegetables exposed for sale. The delicate tinge of the clustering grape; the bright scarlet of the tomata; the rich green of the pimiento; the dark purple of the fig; the golden hue of the oranges and lemons, are all blended together, and the fruits are heaped around in the most lavish profusion.

Near the Custom House there has been planted lately an avenue of Bella-sombras (Phytolacea dioica), a very pretty broad-leaved tree, which grows rapidly but soon decays; and all around are masses of scarlet geranium, which flourish here in the highest luxuriance. Close by is a small fort, from whence may be obtained one of the best views of the town. Here it appears backed by its Alcazaba, and the double line of walls which connect it with the more lofty fortress of the Gibralfaro. Below, the gigantic cathedral seems to occupy nearly the entire town, while the Mole stretches into the sea, with the light-house at the extremity of the harbour.

The Guadalmedina runs along the western side of the Alameda, dividing the principal portion of the town from the *barrios* or quarters of the Trinidad and Perchel, which are inhabited by a very low and disorderly set of people—a reputation they seem to have possessed ever since the days of Cervantes. There is hardly a drop of water to be seen in the bed of the river, save, now and then, in the winter months, when an unusual quantity of rain has fallen in the mountains, and then it suddenly becomes a raging

torrent, carrying everything before it as it rushes headlong to the sea.

The beach, near the mouth of the river, was the scene of the cruel massacre of Torrijos and his companions in 1831. He led one of the many attempts made by the constitutionalists, and was accompanied by about fifty followers. Lured by the treacherous promises of Moreno, then governor of Málaga, who was leading them on to destruction, they set sail from Gibraltar in the month of December, intending to land at Velez. Watched, however, by a Guarda-Costa, they were obliged to put in at Fuengirola, and on their landing there, were made prisoners by Moreno's emissaries, and were taken into Málaga and shot upon the strand. But the rebels of yesterday may become the heroes of to-day ; and an obelisk in the Plaza de Riego now commemorates their names as martyrs to the cause of liberty. Beyond the Guadalmedina an extensive plain stretches some leagues to the westward, where the distant range of the Yunguera bounds the horizon. To the east of the town the mountains approach close to the shore, the Gibralfaro being built on the last spur. It was across those hills, and between the fortress and the Peak of the Christobal, that Ferdinand's army passed when he came to lay siege to Málaga in 1487. A convent called de la Victoria now marks the spot where the Catholic sovereigns were encamped.

Few cities were ever defended with more resolute courage than Málaga, but the heroic bravery of the governor, Hamet-el-Zegri, did not obtain for him any consideration at the hands of his conquerors, who consigned him to a dungeon for the remainder of his life. Málaga, had her citizens been inspired with his undaunted spirit, might have rivalled the

Saguntum of early Spanish history; but the commercial instinct of its inhabitants rendered them more anxious to secure their lives and property by coming to terms with Ferdinand, than endanger both by a desperate resistance. The heroic efforts of the chief of the Gomeres were counteracted by the more peaceable exertions of Ali Dordus, one of the principal merchants, who was allied to the royal family of Granada. He opened communications with the besiegers and finally surrendered the city, after a three months' siege, during the latter period of which the inhabitants had endured all the horrors of famine. The inhabitants had, however, little reason to be satisfied with the conduct of those to whom the city had surrendered unconditionally. They were imprisoned and reduced to slavery, after having been despoiled of their wealth, and the treatment they received from Ferdinand and Isabella does not redound much to the credit of the conquerors. Ali Dordus himself, however, was rewarded: honours and wealth were showered upon him, and he retired to Antequera, where his son became a convert to Christianity. The latter and his wife were baptised, and received the names of Ferdinand and Isabella de Málaga, which family name is borne by their descendants to the present day. They were made nobles of Castile, and given for arms a shield with four quarterings; the arms of the city they had surrendered; a pomegranate, as descendants of Alhamar; a lion for Castile; and a bar for Aragon.

The Protestant Cemetery is another object of interest, although a melancholy one to the English traveller. It is beautifully situated on the slope of the hills just below the fortress; it was a great boon obtained by the late Mr. Mark, British Consul at

Málaga. The intolerance of the Spanish nation, in not allowing followers of any religion but their own to receive Christian burial in their country, is indeed disgraceful. At Cadiz, Málaga, and still more recently at Madrid, exceptions have been made; but everywhere else in Spain, none but Catholics can be buried in consecrated ground. Protestants have truly every reason to be grateful to Mr. Mark for his exertions. He was much beloved and respected by all who knew him; and the number of Spaniards who followed his remains to the cemetery showed in an expressive manner, the estimation in which he was held. A cross has been placed with great good taste over the entrance to the grounds, which are filled with the choicest flowers, and very prettily laid out. One of the first Englishmen interred there was a Mr. Boyd, a companion of Torrijos, and who perished with the rest of his unfortunate comrades.

It is also owing to the exertions of our present Consul, the son of the late Mr. Mark, that the service of the Church of England is performed twice every Sunday by a regularly appointed chaplain, in a room in the Consulate very suitably fitted up as a chapel. There are several Protestant families permanently residing in the town; artisans employed in the iron foundries, &c.; and these, added to the numerous visitors, who now flock there in the winter for health, form a very respectable congregation.

Christmas is kept with great festivities in Spain. Its approach is heralded by enormous flocks of turkeys which block up all the streets, waiting for purchasers. Turkey on Christmas-day is quite as indispensable here as in England, and serves to remind one of the festive time approaching, although the appearance of the weather, the deep blue sky and glorious sun above,

and the groves of oranges and lemons around, have little in common with the depth of winter, and the kind of weather which generally accompanies Christmas in our own land.

Christmas Eve, or the Noche Buena, as it is called, is the season most peculiarly celebrated, and the chosen time for an interchange of presents. Cakes, fowls, fruit, and every description of provisions form the mutual interchange of good will. The noise in the streets for some days previously becomes intolerable from the screeching of the turkeys mingled with the din of the zambomba, a nondescript kind of instrument upon which all the little children play most frantically. It consists of something resembling a flower-pot; over the top is stretched a piece of parchment, into which a small reed is inserted, and on this the performer rubs his hands up and down, after moistening them, and the result is anything but melodious. The noise on the Noche Buena itself is dreadful, and it is quite hopeless to expect any sleep, as the people spend the whole night in the streets singing and playing. In the morning the market is one of the great sights; and the crowds of people who come in from the country make it very animated. The streets are all blocked up with stalls, on which are sold *dulces* of every description, and the most common little toys with figures of Virgins and saints, with which to ornament the *nacimientos*.

These nacimientos are representations of the Nativity, the grotto of Bethlehem with the Virgin and Child, and kings and shepherds, and cows, and every variety of groups of figures and of animals, done up in the most tawdry tinsel and finery, and all brilliantly lighted up every evening until the new year. Some of them in the wealthier houses are very prettily arranged,

while others—for they have them in every house—are of course of the commonest description. In the evening we went to a supper, given to the old people and children, at the Mendicity Institution. It was admirably arranged. The children, very neatly dressed, were seated at two long tables, between which the bishop, attended by some of his clergy, walked up and down, and gave them his blessing before they commenced. Each child had its own allowance of four small plates containing *bacallao*, or salt cod, salad, sweet potatoes and dulces, with a loaf of bread. They seemed well cared for, and looked the very pictures of happiness; but, at the conclusion of the feast, the noise was deafening, for when they had finished, they each produced a zambomba, or a tambourine, and the din soon drove us from the room. We then went to see the old people, who were dining below. They also looked very clean and happy. There was a nacimiento at one end of the room very brilliantly got up—the crowd round the Virgin and Child represented as playing on the zambomba.

From the supper we went to midnight mass at the cathedral, which was splendidly lighted, but so crowded it was impossible to get near the high altar. The music disappointed me, and the congregation, with the exception of those kneeling near the railings, did not seem animated with much devotional feeling—the side aisles appearing more like a fashionable promenade, than the scene of a great religious ceremony.

On St. Anthony's day, the 17th of January, the people all go out into the country, taking with them refreshments, and spend the day scattered in groups along the shore and up the beds of the torrents. Some dance to the tune of the lively bolera, while others are

playing on the guitar and singing the monotonous rondeña. The groups thus formed are very picturesque, and on these occasions the men still appear in their Andalucian costume.

The rides in the mountains round Málaga are very wild and lonely. You wend your way up the beds of torrents ; the mountains rising on either side, at times narrowing into a gloomy gorge, and again opening out upon some vine-clad valley, with here and there a solitary farm house. They are rarely inhabited by their owners, for Spaniards have an instinctive dread of robbers, and would not consider it safe to reside so far away from a town. Some few years ago the ladies of one of the wealthy families in Málaga, who ventured to pass a few months at their *hacienda*, found themselves attacked one day by a gang of bandits, and would probably have been carried off to the mountains and held to ransom, had not the master of the house fortunately arrived, just at the moment, on horseback. An accident saved the party ; the robbers fired at him, as he approached, and, the frightened horse jumping over a wall, threw his rider, when the robbers seeing him fall, fancied they had killed him, and decamped immediately. But these incidents are few and far between, and the traveller may generally ride through every nook and corner of the mountains, unarmed, without any fear of robbers, as we did the whole winter we were at Málaga. Every peasant you meet has his musket on his shoulder, or slung from his saddle ; but it is for his own self-defence, and as he passes you he touches his hat, and gives you the passing valediction, "*Vaya V con Dios*,"—"May you go with God," with a courtesy and civility which make you feel you are among friends. Generally speaking the weapon is as harmless as the owner, for guns will not go off without

locks, and of these there is a charming deficiency. It is seldom, however, except in the frequented paths, that you meet with a human being. An oppressive feeling of loneliness overpowers you as you wander through the mountains. All seems so silent, so deserted ; no singing of birds to relieve the stillness around ; only now and then the tinkling of the shepherd's bell reminds one there is anything animated to disturb the strange tranquillity. The people all live clustered together in the villages. There is no scattered agricultural population. A few families residing here and there in the *cortijos*, or farm houses, immediately in the neighbourhood of the towns.

Many of these cortijos are beautifully situated ; sometimes on the side of a precipitous hill, the slopes of which are covered with vineyards ; at others on the brow of a rocky height, exposed to all the burning heat of the sun ; the frames for drying and preparing the celebrated Málaga raisins forming conspicuous objects near the houses. The grapes are laid upon banks of earth enclosed in wooden frames. In the months of July and August they do not require more than eight or nine days to be converted into raisins, but later in the season as much as twenty or twenty-five days are necessary.

The colouring of the mountains is magnificent ; the deep red of the soil in many places throwing over them the richest tints, more particularly at sunset ; but the absence of trees is a sad drawback to Spanish scenery. There are very few to be seen for some distance around Málaga ; almost the only approach to such a thing being the charob tree, the foliage of which is of a rich green. It does not grow to any height ; but it is a welcome object here, where trees are such a rarity. The hedges are generally formed of the aloe and prickly

pear; the latter being extensively cultivated for the sake of the cochineal, which are fed upon its fleshy leaves. This insect was once an important article of export from Málaga, but of late the trade in it has much diminished. The beds of the torrents are full of oleanders, the pink flowers of which in summer bloom with the greatest brilliancy. The Flora of Spain is extremely rich, and in spring the plains and mountain sides are covered with a profusion of wild flowers, but their beauty is short-lived; they soon pass away beneath the scorching heat of the sun, and by the end of July the whole country becomes parched and arid, with scarcely a sign of vegetation.

The convent of the Angeles is one of the most picturesquely situated places in the neighbourhood. Owing to the suppression of the convents, it is now nothing more than a farm house, but the beautiful foliage in the garden makes it most refreshing to the eye. It stands at the entrance to a rocky glen, and the pines and palm trees which cluster round it make it appear quite an oasis in the desert.

On beyond the Angeles are the Ermitas, where are the ruins of several hermitages, charmingly situated, surrounded by rocks, out of the crevices of which a countless variety of wild flowers push forth in every direction. Hence may be obtained one of the most beautiful birds-eye views of the town and surrounding country, with the sea beyond. At the foot of the hill the plain extends itself towards the town, the whole of which may be seen, with its Cathedral, Alcazaba, and Gibralfaro, and the mountains stretching on towards Velez Málaga. In wandering through the defiles up the valley of the Guadalmedina, you come occasionally on lofty bridges spanning the ravines, which serve to convey water from the mountains to irrigate the fields

valleys, and running along the mountain sides ; the moisture they diffuse around, making their neighbourhood a favourite haunt for wild flowers. Their banks and the sides of the bridges are covered with the Maiden-hair Fern, which grows here to an enormous size ; its graceful fronds, falling in the richest luxuriance, mingled with the dark-blue panicles of the *Trachelium cæruleum*, called by the country people the Widow's Flower, a plant which flourishes in all precipitous places where water is constantly trickling down.

Towards the end of March we ascended the Cerro de San Anton, a peak rising to the height of about 1400 feet. It forms the highest point of the chain of hills which extends along the coast from Málaga to Velez. About half way is a large farm house, where we stopped to rest—and then climbed to the summit, over rocks covered with several varieties of cistus, the beautiful blossoms of which give such a charm to this southern vegetation. Many low shrubs were scattered about—and multitudes of flowers of every hue were growing in profusion amongst them. The view from the summit embraces a splendid prospect. The coast of Africa appeared close to us ; while to the north, hills rise above hills, presenting the same rounded appearance, peculiar to this calcareous formation, many clothed with vineyards to the very summit.

GRANADA.

CHAPTER II.

CLIMATE OF MÁLAGA—SOCIETY—AMUSEMENTS—LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION—MORNING VISITS—KNOWLEDGE OF THE LANGUAGE INDISPENSABLE—AN EXCURSION—ALHAURIN—COIN—CHURRIANO—TORRE MOLINOS—DEPARTURE—RIDE TO GRANADA—VELEZ MÁLAGA—MOUNTAIN MISTS—A NIGHT AT ZAFFARAYA—MURDER CROSSES—ALHAMA—ITS SIEGES—PULGAR—DREARY ROAD—FIRST VIEW OF GRANADA—THE VEGA—THE ARAB SETTLERS—APPROACH TO GRANADA—HOUSE HUNTING—DIFFICULTIES—CARMEN SAN ANTON—ITS CHARMING SITUATION—TORRES BERMEJAS—AN HONEST COURIER—SELECT NEIGHBOURHOOD.

THE last few years Málaga has become a very favourite residence for invalids. Its climate, certainly, is exceedingly mild and genial; and the invalid who can obtain rooms facing the sun will seldom suffer from cold during the winter. There is but little rain: in fact, its excessive dryness might be hurtful to some constitutions, to which the moister air of Madeira might prove more beneficial. It is, however, occasionally visited by bitter winds, called the Terral, which are the warmest in summer and coldest in winter. They blow across the plain to the westward of the town, and while they prevail, the want of rain makes the dust quite insupportable, particularly in the Alameda. A cloud-

less sky and glowing sun may offer great and deserved attractions to the invalid, whose hopes are all centred upon climate; but let no one be tempted to fix on Málaga, as a residence, for any other reason.

Society there is none; and with the exception of the theatre, there are no amusements whatever which could contribute to make time pass agreeably, and no objects of interest to attract the attention of the traveller. With the exception of Madrid, there is no society in Spanish towns, in our acceptation of the word.

People go to the theatre every evening, and sometimes visit each other in their boxes; but never receive at home except their intimate friends or relations. Even the carnival does not rouse them. At Málaga no notice of it seemed to be taken beyond one or two masked balls at the Lyceo and at the theatre. The former was more select; and, doubtless, amusing enough, in the by-play of the masquerade, to all those conversant with the "ins and outs" of the assembly. Many of the ladies went unmasked, in ball-dresses. Though a southern race, they do not appear to have any genius for the peculiar spirit of the masque, as seen in Italy. The ball at the theatre was deadly-lively; no one danced, not even the masks; and it seemed as though the people were sitting in their boxes merely to be looked at.

The tourist in visiting Andalucia may spare himself the unnecessary trouble of taking with him letters of introduction; except such as relate to matters of business. It is true, when he does present them, nothing can be more polite and engaging than his reception. He is met with a profuse generosity, or rather prodigality, which to the uninitiated is positively distressing. Everything is his, "*a su disposicion*," but in most cases they are mere words of course, and there

it ends. Not that the Spaniard is really inhospitable; but it is not the custom to entertain. Formerly, I am told, it was otherwise; but continued civil wars, and the unsettled state of society which resulted from them, have broken up social intercourse. These remarks, however, do not apply to the English settled in Andalucia; whatever other customs of their adopted country they may assume, that is one which they seem to consider "more honoured in the breach than the observance."

What is seen of Spaniards is very much limited to morning visits; and of all dreadful things to undergo is the first visit in a Spanish house. A most important preliminary is the toilette: the richer it is, the greater the compliment. Formerly evening dresses were considered indispensable; but this custom is now gone out. Dressing accomplished, you sally forth, and reaching the house, ring at the door, which seems to open by some inscrutable means, for no attendant is visible; but on looking round the open court or *patio,* in which you now find yourself, you discover the dumb porter to be a cord attached to the door, and acting through a window in the floor above, through which you see a head protruded awaiting your commands. You ask whether the lady is at home; upon being answered in the affirmative, you look round for some servant to usher you into the drawing-room, but you look in vain. You have no alternative but to trust to your own guidance, and ascending the staircase you find yourself in a large corridor running round the patio, out of which several rooms open. You see one door which looks more promising than the rest; you enter, and find yourself in sudden darkness. A little time enables you to see, through the twilight of half-closed shutters, a handsome room with a stately sofa at one end, a most

uncomfortable looking arm-chair on each side of it, and chairs and tables ranged in due order round the walls; looking the very picture of stiffness and formality. A minute or two elapses and the lady of the house enters: she makes her fair visitor take the place of honour on her right hand on the sofa, while the gentlemen place themselves at her feet, not in reality, but in words, according to the indispensable form of Spanish politeness. She then begs he will place his hat upon a chair, this article of a gentleman's toilette being treated with nearly as much consideration as its owner. And now conversation begins, as lively as conversations must be among strangers who have not even the delightful and never-failing resource of weather to talk about; for what can one say of weather in a country where it is always fine. Fortunately your first visit, which is looked upon quite as a thing of etiquette, need not last long, and you soon rise to take your leave amidst an overpowering amount of offers, in which you find the house and everything else placed at your disposal—a compliment you must return by declaring everything you possess is hers; for in Spain you have a right to do what you like with what is not your own, and the hotel in which you are staying must be offered as though it belonged to you. Absurd as all this strikes the stranger, it is, after all, but another way of assuring him they will be delighted to see him whenever he likes to call, and be happy to assist him in everything he may require. The lady of the house always accompanies you to the top of the staircase, where a second edition of civil speeches is gone through and you descend, feeling thankful that so formal an undertaking should at length be accomplished.

All this stiffness, however, soon wears away, and you gradually become accustomed to this very independent

manner of finding your way about a stranger's house; and habit soon teaches you to distinguish the reception-room, the folding doors of which are generally open. Spaniards never sit in the room in which they receive; in fact, the principle of Spanish visiting seems to be to make themselves and their guests as little comfortable as possible, from the feeling of formality which always prevails. They would consider it a downright insult to their visitors to be seen working, or engaged in anything save ceremonious attention in doing the honours of their house. Nothing, however, can be more friendly than their manner, and they offer you their house, &c., in a way which would make you imagine you could not confer a greater favour than by accepting them.

Stiff, but courteous in their manner to strangers, when once you become on intimate terms with them, you find them the most unceremonious people in the world, and entering into every sort of amusement with such a zest that they appear very like over-grown children. The women here have, in fact, but little conversation, except about the theatre and all the *on dits* of society, concerning which they certainly can discourse in a most lively and agreeable manner; but they are thoroughly uneducated. As children, they are always running about with the servants; taking a few lessons in music and in French, and keeping as late hours as their parents; but as to having education under regular superintendence, such a thing is almost unknown. They seem to consider our treatment of children as something too barbarous, and are always pitying them for the wretched lives they are made to lead.

A knowledge of the language is indispensable to enable travellers to get on at all in Spanish society in the provinces, for it is very rare to meet any one

who speaks or can understand French. In fact, I know no country in Europe where a knowledge of the national language is so necessary to enable the traveller to get on among all classes. Save in Granada and Seville, there is not even a *laquais de place* to assist him as to what he ought to see, or interpret his wishes.

Indeed, in all the luxuries to which travellers are accustomed in other countries, Spain is sadly deficient. In Andalucia the accommodations at the inns are bad, and the cookery still worse. At Málaga and Seville, the principal hotels have some approach to comfort; but in all the other towns nothing can be worse. No one ought to travel in Spain who is not prepared to bear with oriental resignation whatever may fall to his lot.

Before leaving Málaga we made an excursion to Alhaurin, a village beautifully situated in the mountains to the west, about four leagues distant. We went on horseback—the only pleasant mode of travelling in a country where the roads are so intolerable. After a monotonous ride across the plain, we reached the Guadalhorce, a river taking its rise in the mountains of Antequera, and the bed of which really does contain water. It is, in fact, a very respectable stream. Here are the remains of a large bridge which, like many other things in Spain, was commenced on a grand scale but never finished. The piers, covered with creepers, are in a state of most picturesque decay. The arches of the aqueduct of which this bridge was to have formed a portion stretch some distance along the plain. The Sierra de Mijas now gradually interrupts the view of the sea, and the valley at its foot as it opens before you presents a beautiful picture of verdure and fertility, thickly covered with olive farms and orange groves. This part of the road many years ago was much infested with robbers, who, on payment of a certain sum, gave

the inhabitants of Málaga a regular pass to enable them to go backwards and forwards unmolested to their country houses in Alhaurin. On emerging from the valley, the road crosses over bleak, high ground, covered with the low fan palm. This plant, which grows to such perfection on the Rock of Gibraltar, is rather stunted here ; it is, however, converted to some use, the root of it being eaten as an esculent by the peasantry. Descending a hill, you arrive at Alhaurin, situated on a slope, with a magnificent valley below it, reposing in a perfect amphitheatre of mountains. It is quite a scene of enchantment ; and shows what wonders cultivation can effect in this favoured land wherever water is abundant.

The entire valley is one continued garden, and the prevalence of shade, and constant supply of water, which gushes noisy and sparkling through a thousand channels, facilitate the production of every species of fruit. Oranges, lemons, cherries, strawberries, grapes, and mulberries, flourish equally well, and enable the inhabitants to provide for the markets of Málaga. The village itself is remarkably clean, and the houses within doors are in keeping with their external appearance. Just above the town is a *nacimiento*, or spring, whence the water flows as clear as crystal from the base of a wall of rocks, which runs along for half a league, cutting the arid slope of the Sierra. Above, the mountains rise to the height of 3500 feet, their barren and sandy sides furrowed by numberless ravines. From a small chapel in the neighbourhood, the eye takes in the whole chain of mountains beyond Málaga, crowned by the snow-capped summits of the Sierra Nevada, of which we here obtained a view for the first time. We watched the effect of the setting sun as it left peak after peak in shadow, until its rays

lingered on the loftiest point of all, casting a roseate hue on the glittering snow, and showing well the immense height of the Sierra. From Alhaurin we proceeded to Coin, and on our route passed some unusually fine orange trees. Coin is likewise prettily situated, surrounded by gardens and rushing waters. In the latter village our appearance excited a good deal of amusement among the inhabitants, who all turned out to see the strangers—rather a novel sight in this out-of-the-way place. They paid us the compliment of taking us for *titeres*, or an equestrian company of strolling players ; and one little urchin mounted a horse, and accompanied us to the nacimiento above the town, showing off his horsemanship, evidently in the hope of being engaged as one of the troop. He offered to follow us to the world's end, horse and all, if we would have him ; the fact of walking off with his father's horse not appearing to lie heavily upon his conscience. Here, too, the water springs from a sandy bed deliciously fresh and clear. To the west is the village of Munda, the scene of the celebrated battle of Monda, in which Cæsar defeated the sons of Pompey, A.D. 45.

Returning to Alhaurin, we started on our way back to Málaga. On the southern slope of the Sierra de Mijas, facing the latter town, is Churriano, a favourite summer resort of the Malaguenians. Near it is a villa called the Retiro, belonging to the Conde de Villacáyar. It contains some very pretty fountains ; but the great rarity of water and of shady walks in this treeless land makes the natives exalt it into a fair rival of Versailles. The fields round it, planted with olives, as old, they say, as the conquest, appeared one sheet of snow, from the quantities of the large white iris with which they were covered.

At the extreme point of the Sierra is the small

village of Torre Molinos, where, as well as at Churriano, most of the bread consumed at Málaga is made. Nothing can exceed the cleanliness of the houses here. The stream which flows through keeps several mills at work. The greatest care is bestowed upon the corn preparatory to grinding. It is carefully washed in running water, and dried again in the sun several times before it is consigned to the mill. A man of the name of Parody has a very pretty villa here, at which strangers can make arrangements to stay; and it certainly is a desirable place at which to spend a little time during the spring or summer months.

From Torre Molinos to Málaga, the road crosses the Guadalhorce by a ford, and you ride over a large sandy tract, covered with the yellow flowers of the Ononis. The fields are irrigated by enormous water wheels, having jars attached to their circumference, which, as they are moved slowly round by oxen or mules, draw up the water from the wells below, and turn it over into channels, whence it is distributed through the country. They are the very counterpart of the Egyptian *Sakayeh*, and are one among the many things which remind the traveller of the long dominion of the Arabs, and give such an eastern character to Andalucia.

The time having now arrived for leaving Málaga, we determined on riding to Granada, instead of taking the diligence, which goes through Loja, performing the journey in about eighteen hours. We left Málaga in the afternoon; the ride to Velez not occupying more than five or six hours. Our road lay along the coast the whole way; now stretching along the sandy shores, now rounding some jutting bluff, its atalaya, or old Moorish watch-tower perched, crumbling and weather-beaten, on the summit. To the right, the blue waters of the Mediterranean lay extended to the horizon, and

on the left rose the low chain which runs between Málaga and Velez, covered with vines, while the intermediate plain was one carpet of flowers of every hue. We left the first week in April, when the vegetation on the sea-coast is in all its vigour, and as we approached Velez Málaga, the fertility and richness increased. We passed between gigantic hedges of cactus and aloes, among which our own common blackberry was growing in singular contrast, while through the whole a sort of pitcher-plant, the Aristolochia Bœtica, with its dark purplish flowers twined round and round in every direction. The wild aloe covered the rocks in thick tufts, with its large pendulous yellow flowers just coming into bloom ; and here and there a beautiful statice, called the Blue Everlasting, from the crispness of its bright flowers, which do not fade. These in very Cockney fashion are much used in Gibraltar to ornament the fire-places during the summer months.

Large fields of sugar-cane occupy the rich valley which stretches for about half a league from the town of Velez to the sea-shore, through which a small stream winds, shaded by the silver poplar. The view of the valley which we obtained as we surmounted a precipitous rock, jutting out into the sea, was very beautiful, as it lay steeped in the richest verdure, and backed by the range of the Sierra Tejeda, which was still partially covered with snow.

The town of Velez stands on the slope of this chain, which preserves it effectually from the cold north winds. Its ruined castle, standing on a craggy rock, occupies a striking position in the centre of the town. We put up at a posada on the Alameda, a raised walk planted with orange-trees, and had our first experience of Spanish inns. This was not so very bad, as we had

clean beds, although the cookery was, as usual, not much to be commended.

In the morning, we walked up to the old castle, of which only one small tower and some ruined walls remain. It commands a splendid view over the fertile Vega and the Mediterranean beyond.

A Moorish legend tells that the present is not the original site of the town of Velez. In the days of Almanzor, the town was governed by a Moorish prince, who had an only daughter, renowned for her beauty, and on whom he lavished all his treasures. He built for her, on the verdant slopes of the Sierra, a magnificent palace, where she resided. It happened, that the Alcalde of Velez, inflamed with the glowing descriptions he was continually hearing of her charms, determined to avail himself of her father's temporary absence, and carry her off. He succeeded in doing so ; but most fatal were the results which followed his treachery. Scarcely had intelligence of the outrage reached her father's ears, when marching to Velez at the head of such troops as he could hastily gather, he assaulted and carried the town. The Alcalde and all his family were massacred, and the castle and town razed to the ground. The wretched inhabitants soon began to rebuild ; but the calamitous spot was shunned, and the new foundations were laid on the site of the present town. Velez bears for arms the figure of a king on horseback slaying the Moors, with a groom lying dead at his feet. They were given in commemoration of Ferdinand having performed the feat of killing with his own hand a Moor in a skirmish during the siege. El Zagal having been defeated in a nocturnal attack he made upon the Christian army, the inhabitants resolved to surrender. They obtained, however, an honourable capitulation, and the city was taken possession of by Ferdinand, who

ARRIVING AT A POSADA

Dadiman Bin Kam

advanced immediately after with his whole army to lay siege to Málaga.

From Velez the road winds up along the river, and enters the valleys and mountain passes. It skirts along by numerous orange groves, which at this season were just coming into flower, and diffusing around a delicious perfume. We passed several picturesque points of view before we came to a wretched village called Viñuelas, after which the aspect of the country gradually changed. The richly cultivated valleys gave place to more barren scenery ; to the right rose the arid slopes of the Tejeda, with several villages perched along the heights, and the sides furrowed with numerous ravines, channels worn, as it were, by devastating torrents in the sandy soil. Before us towered a vast wall of rock, through a wide fissure in which we had to pass to reach the high lands on the northern side of the mountain. This pass is called the Puerta de Zaffaraya, derived from an Arabic word, meaning, the field of the shepherds. There is here a Venta, or village inn, by the wayside, which presented, as we rode by, a gayer appearance than we could have looked for in so wild and desolate a situation. A number of peasants, and a family of gipsies, had just arrived down the mountain road, and as they grouped around the entrance of the old tumble-down house, their gay and varied costume, the trappings of the mules and horses, the gesticulations of the owners, all afforded us a scene exceedingly animated and picturesque.

The road now began gradually to ascend, but we had not proceeded far, when a thick mist came rolling down from the mountains and completely enveloped us. Night was likewise coming on, so we deemed it more prudent to return to Zaffaraya, and put up there for the night. When we again arrived, there was no

appearance of life or animation about the place; the peasants had all departed, and everything around looked dark and lonely. The house itself consisted of one long room with its mud floor; a partition separated us from the horses; while our guides and ourselves shared the remainder with the owners of the house. Such were the accommodations we enjoyed in passing our first night in a regular venta; and yet, as we gathered round the fire, and partook of the provisions which the guides had unpacked, and chatted with our companions, the novelty of the scene would have more than balanced its privations, were it not that a feeling of insecurity crept upon our minds. Nothing certainly could be more unpromising or more forbidding than the aspect of the place; and the suspicion, that it was little better than a haunt of contrabandistas and robbers, was more than sanctioned by the old woman who kept it informing me she had two sons, who were both at Ceuta, the fortress to which many of the Spanish convicts of the worst grade were sent. Wrapped in our *mantas*, we slept through the night as best we could; and none of us were sorry when the dawn of day gave us notice we might prepare for our departure. It was still drizzling rain, but the morning cleared up after we had been about an hour on the road. We crossed a flat high-land where corn was growing under the shade of evergreen oaks, which, scattered here and there, gave it quite a park-like appearance.

Passing over a mountain-path, the distant range of the Sierra Nevada soon burst upon our view, one wall of snow. The northern sides of the Tejeda were still covered with their wintry mantle. Nothing could exceed the dreariness of the ride for the two hours which elapsed before reaching Alhama. There was

nought to relieve the monotony of the scene, save the agreeable reflections suggested by the sight of the small low crosses, with their heaps of stones beside them, telling of the lonely wayfarers who have fallen victims to robbers in these mountain fastnesses. "Aquí mataron"—here they slew so and so—is always the commencement of the inscription, the name and date following, with an adjuration to the passers-by to pray for his soul. Mournfully they strike upon the mind in these lonely and deserted paths, where, far from all human assistance, the unhappy victim fell beneath the knife of his murderer. But these sad mementos need not alarm the traveller much : in these days one must be peculiarly unfortunate to fall into the hands of banditti ; and even if such a fate should by ill-luck attend him, his captors would find it more profitable to carry him off to the mountains, until they obtained a heavy ransom, than put him out of the way and give his friends the trouble of erecting a cross over his remains.

I was much disappointed at the first view of Alhama. The houses appear the same colour as the soil on which they stand, and coming down upon it from the high grounds, it is impossible to form any idea of its singular situation. It stands on the edge of one of those rents in the mountains, which form a very striking feature in the scenery of Andalucia ; and it must have been in former days an almost impregnable fortress. From the valley beneath, it is seen to most advantage. The rocks, which form the sides of the gorge, rise almost perpendicularly from the bed of the river gliding at their feet ; while above their beetling crests, appears an uneven line of houses, built on the very verge of the precipice. On the mountain side, it was defended by a long line of walls and

towers. Its tortuous and narrow streets still retain a very Oriental appearance. Some distance up the river are the sulphureous warm baths, from which its Arabic name is derived.

Alhama is familiar to the English reader from the description of its famous surprise by the Christians, and Byron's translation of the well-known ballad, which speaks of the excitement caused in Granada when the news of this unlooked-for assault reached the Moslem capital. This event was the more remarkable, as the place was the first taken during the war which ended with the extermination of the Moors from the Peninsula. The Marquis of Cadiz, assembling some of his followers, attacked Alhama in the dead of night, and after a desperate resistance, succeeded in taking it. The loss of this important port, long considered one of the keys of the kingdom of Granada, spread consternation among the Moors. Muley Hacen, rousing himself, flew to wrest it from the conquerors. The few who were within the fortress were sorely pressed, and many a chivalrous deed was performed in attempting to relieve them. This was at length accomplished by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who, forgetting the feuds which had long subsisted between his house and that of Ponce de Leon, went out at the head of the flower of the Andalucian chivalry, and throwing himself into Alhama, Muley Hacen was compelled to raise the siege. He returned, however, shortly afterwards ; but losing some of his bravest warriors in a midnight assault, was again compelled to retreat. Still, from its being situated in the heart of the enemy's country, Alhama was considered dangerous and difficult to retain, and discussions were raised as to the propriety of dismantling its fortifications and evacuating it. But when the idea was suggested to Isabella, she indig-

nantly rejected it, and resolved on keeping a fortress the acquisition of which had cost so much blood. This resolution led to the appearance of a new hero on the stage. Alhama, as had been anticipated, was not allowed to enjoy repose, and a third time the Moorish troops lay encamped before it. On this occasion, however, it owed its safety, not to the great houses of Medina Sidonia or Ponce de Leon, but to the courageous efforts of a humble squire, Fernando del Pulgar, the Bayard of Spanish chivalry, who here commenced that daring and romantic career which won him the designation of "El de las Hazanas"—He of the Exploits. The deeds related of this *preux chevalier* during the continuance of the war, from his relief of Alhama and taking of Salar, to his grand achievement of entering Granada while still in possession of the Moors, and planting with his dagger an inscription on the door of the Mosque, dedicating it thenceforth to the honour of the Virgin, exceed almost the bounds of credence, and have generally been ascribed to the exaggerations of the ballad poetry. But a very interesting little work—the "Life of Pulgar"—has recently been published by Martinez de la Rosa, in which that distinguished writer shows, from authentic sources, that they are no exaggerations, and that Pulgar was not only the hero of every hair-brained adventure during the war, but that he was also an accomplished scholar, as profound and sagacious in council as he was reckless in the field, and was frequently selected by the wily Ferdinand to conduct affairs requiring the greatest prudence and judgment. We may have occasion to refer to him again in describing the Cathedral of Granada, where he is the only subject who has had the honour of being interred within its precincts.

Nothing can be more wearying than the road from

Alhama to the Vega of Granada. For the greater part of the way, clayey, barren mountain sides alone meet the eye, save here and there, where tufts of rosemary and other aromatic plants spring up, and a few corn-fields show some feeble attempts at cultivation. The monotony was slightly relieved by the village of Cacin, situated in a deep valley, with a few trees clustered along the banks of a rivulet. Passing this, we ascended again, and continued over a similar dreary road, until we reached half a dozen miserable houses called the Ventas de Guelma. The road now crossed a treeless plain, one sheet of waving corn, without however any trace of population. It took us about two hours to reach La Malá, a wretched village surrounded by large salt-pits ; the low range of hills separating it from the Vega of Granada being chiefly composed of gypsum, highly impregnated with salt.

We rode up in haste to the brow of the hill before us, each anxious to obtain the first view of Granada ; and glorious indeed it was, for the setting sun was just gilding the distant towers of the Alhambra, and the queenly city rose before us, with her girdle of mountains, while the Vega was spread out as a verdant carpet at her feet. There can be few prospects more enchanting than this ; the fertile plain, extending for about thirty miles in length, seemed a very Paradise, after the dreary country we had been traversing. It looked like the bed of a lake, from which the waters had receded, leaving a vast plain of the richest verdure, encircled by lofty mountains. The eye wandered over every variety of undulating ground. From the low mounds on which we were standing, it swept round to the left—over hills, gradually rising in height, until they broke into the precipitous cliffs of Alfacar, which,

from this distance, appeared close behind the town; while to our right rose the long chain of the Sierra Nevada, its alpine heights at this season one mass of snow.

The natural beauty of its situation, combined with all the thousand historic recollections which crowd round the very name of Granada, render this one of the most striking scenes which can be presented to the traveller.

The Arabs, whose thoughts were constantly recurring to the land from which they sprang, awarded the palm of beauty to Granada over their favourite cities of Damascus, Cairo, and Bagdad; and as they loved to trace in the land of their adoption every possible similarity to the country they had left, they settled themselves in those scenes which recalled their own homes most vividly to their recollection. The wild hordes from the deserts of Palmyra were satisfied with the arid coasts of Almeria and the plains of Murcia. The legions from the hilly country of Palestine and Syria found a resemblance to their native mountains in the fastnesses of the Serrania of Ronda. The fields of Archidona were peopled by those who had pastured their flocks in the valley of the Jordan; but the inhabitants of Damascus could find nothing to remind them of the Paradise they had quitted until they beheld Granada.

Here their willing fancies soon traced a resemblance to the home of their childhood; the Sierra Nevada recalled the snowy summits of the Lebanon; the city stood like their own on the edge of a fertile plain, while the Darro, Xenil, and other streams, rivalled the rivers of Damascus in the abundance of their waters; countless gardens and orchards covered the Vega as in their own rich and smiling valley; the sky

was as bright, and the air as pure ; and they settled themselves with rapture in a land they loved to call the Damascus of the west. And it was not difficult for their warm imaginations to discover this resemblance. From some of the slopes of the Sierra Nevada it has often struck me very forcibly; with this difference, however, that while the Vega of Granada is enclosed on every side by mountains, the cultivated lands around Damascus lose themselves in the sand of the desert, one arid boundless plain stretching far away to the horizon.

The sun had set ; and our guides reminded us we had yet some distance to go before we reached the city, on which we were gazing with so much admiration. We accordingly descended the hill, and reached Gabia la Grande, a large village on the margin of the Vega. We now entered upon a wide road, with fields of corn and hemp on each side, interspersed with orchards, intersected by streams of water in every direction. Two hours' ride across the Vega brought us to Granada. It was night long before we reached it : but there was a certain charm in the darkness ; for, as we approached, the precipitous hills before us seemed illuminated with countless stars, and as we entered by the Alameda of the Xenil, the noise of rushing waters, the deep shadows of the trees, with the lights scattered amongst them, gave it an undefined fairy-like appearance which left upon the mind the most agreeable impressions. Under other circumstances, trees and water might not conjure up scenes of such rare beauty ; but any one who has resided six months at Málaga may be excused for the unwonted degree of pleasure they excited.

We stopped at the Fonda de la Amistad, an hotel near the theatre. After duly visiting the Alhambra

we devoted ourselves to house-hunting, having come to Granada with the intention of remaining there five or six months. There are many houses to be had in the town itself; for, unfortunately, the higher classes are fast deserting it for the superior charms offered by the *Corté*, as the Spaniards designate Madrid. But we were anxious to get a house near the Alhambra, that we might have the advantage of a garden, and the splendid views which every elevated point presents. This we found no easy matter to effect; the *Carmenes*, as they call the villas around Granada, being generally very wretched houses, their owners keeping them up less as residences, than as places of amusement, where they can retire from the town to pass a refreshing day during the heat of summer.

They are almost all surrounded by large gardens full of long vine-walks and cooled by fountains. We went over several; but found it difficult to meet with one which was suitable. Either the house was not sufficiently large, or the owners did not choose to let it; and we were soon taught that patience is a virtue which must be practised when dealing with Spaniards. Like the Orientals, they see no reason why people should be in a hurry; to-morrow for them answers all the purposes of to-day. What with arrangements and diplomatic transactions with people who did not wish it to be known they could degrade themselves by letting their houses,—time passed away; and when we did find ourselves settled, a whole month had elapsed since our arrival. Altogether we had an amusing insight into the way things may be managed in this country. One Carmen we went to see, the owner would not dispose of it; but the man who showed it to us, intimated that he knew a person to whose sister the owner of the house was very devoted, and if we

promised him something for his trouble, he would, through his friend, induce the young lady to persuade the owner to let us have it. But this Carmen, it might truly be said, was not to be had for either love or money, for the negotiation proved a complete failure.

At length we obtained a most charming villa, the smallness of the house being amply compensated for by the beauty of the situation. It was, of course, unfurnished, but buying or hiring furniture for a summer residence in these countries is not a very serious undertaking, for, in such a climate, so little is required.

The situation was quite enchanting: on the extremity of the southern spur of the hill on which the Alhambra stands. It commanded the whole country, from the Pass of Moclin on the right, to the Sierra Nevada on the left, embracing the Vega with its encircling hills. We had a vine-covered terrace, where we spent our days shaded by the luxuriant foliage, and refreshed by the sound of running water from numerous fountains, while the rich clustering grapes hung thick above our heads. It was a lovely spot from which to view the glorious landscape, bathed in all the brilliant hues of the setting sun as he sank behind the Sierra Elvira, clothing the mountains in a purple garb, and shedding a flood of golden light upon the plain. At moonlight it possessed a charm different, yet as great. Then, the Torre de la Vela stood out like a giant watching over the sleeping city below, ready with its deep-toned bell to give alarm, if danger should arise: but all now sleeps in peace, and its toll only serves to rouse the weary peasant, and warn him that the hour has arrived to attend to the irrigation of his fields. The large fires, which cover the Vega in the

months of July and August, had a remarkably striking effect from our garden. The peasants here burn the long stubble of the wheat, for the purpose of growing a second crop, chiefly of Indian corn, which they get in about November, and on a dark night the flames burn clear and steadily, the whole country appearing as on fire.

A steep walk covered with vines, and ascended by steps along the terraces, led us to the foot of the Torres Bermejas, whose walls formed the boundary of our garden, — according to all accounts, the Vermilion Tower is the oldest portion of the Alhambra ; some maintaining it to be of Phœnician origin, a source to which everything is ascribed that can boast of great antiquity, or whose history is at all obscure. Called vermilion from the peculiar colour of the tapia and brick of which it is composed ; it was built by the first Arabs, and served to keep in subjection the Christian inhabitants, to whom they assigned this district — now the parish of Saint Cecilius — as a quarter to reside in. The view from the top is perhaps the least pleasing about Granada ; the roofs of the houses in the city below forming too prominent a feature. Here were the dungeons of the Christian captives,—gloomy dens, where many an unhappy wretch pined away long years of misery. All of them had not, alas ! the good fortune of two Catalonian knights, who, being taken prisoners in the capture of Almeria, under Alfonso VII., were thrown into these dungeons. An enormous ransom was demanded for them, and amongst other articles specified, were a hundred Christian damsels ; but as the latter, it is said, were preparing to leave Tarragona, they were relieved from all fears as to their unhappy destiny, by the appearance of the knights themselves, who had been miraculously transported thither by

St. Stephen and St. Dionysius, to whom they had appealed in the hour of danger.

Many a tale of love and sorrow might be gathered from the legends connected with these old walls; but there is nothing romantic about them now. One day, when I was on the roof of the tower, I overheard—not the lament of some captive knight—but the more matter-of-fact confession of a Gibraltar courier, who had decoyed thither two unhappy Englishmen, and was confiding to the old keeper of the tower, that he knew there was nothing to see there, but he always made a point of bringing travellers, that she, too, might benefit by their pesetas; and with many a prayer that he would not forget her, and many a promise in return, he led away his admiring victims, who, in the innocence of their hearts, had been "doing" the view, while their ignorance of the language rendered them quite unconscious of the bye-plot which was acted in their presence.

The wretched huts around are chiefly inhabited by gipsies, and people of the lowest description; but although we could not boast of a very select neighbourhood, we never had any reason to repent of having taken up our abode in the Carmen, in defiance of the assurances we received from many persons in the town that we should be inevitably robbed and murdered if we did so. We used to be out at all hours, both late and early, and pass through the shady walks of the Alhambra at night, without ever meeting with the least annoyance; although travellers still persist in repeating the stories of the guides in the town, who love to frighten them by tales of the insecurity of these gloomy walks, and maintain it is not safe to pass through them after dark.

In short, a more charming place than this for a summer residence, it would be difficult to select; and its vicinity to the Alhambra enabled us to enjoy the latter without the fatigue of ascending to it from the town.

AN AGUADOR.

CHAPTER III.

Obra del Oriente solo
Y de moriscos artifices,
Que hacen palacios de piedra
Como el encaje sutiles.
Trabajo de aquellos manos
Que para que el mundo admire,
Nos dejaron una Alhambra
Del Darro en la orilla humilde.
La Alhambra ante quien Europa
Ya desengañada dice:—
" No fué de barbaros raza
La que alzó el Generalife."

ZORRILLA.

THE ALHAMBRA—EXTERIOR—VIEW FROM SAN NICOLAS—THE ARAB DOMINION—HISTORIC SKETCH IN CONNEXION WITH THE ALHAMBRA—ITS POSITION—ITS APPROACH—GATE OF JUSTICE—CHARLES THE FIFTH'S PALACE—MOORISH PALACE—CONTRASTS—COURT OF MYRTLES—HALL OF THE AMBASSADORS—TOCADOR—MIRADOR OF LINDERAJA—HALL OF THE TWO SISTERS—COURT OF THE LIONS—MODERN RESTORATIONS—HALL OF THE ABENCERRAJES—ALHAMBRA BY MOONLIGHT—THE ALCAZABA—VIEW FROM THE TORRE DE LA VELA—REMAINING TOWERS.

THE Alhambra! The palace-fortress of the Moors! there is a magic in the name which fills the imagination with the memories of the past. Poets have sung of it; painters have transferred its every stone to their canvas; travellers have described it in the most

glowing language, and yet, there are few who could feel disappointment on seeing it—few, at least, of those who are really capable of appreciating the Beautiful in Nature and in Art.

Exquisite as is the interior of the Moorish portion, the exterior seems to me to have even greater charms. Its crimson towers, crowning the heights, assume an ever-varying outline, according to the direction from which they are viewed. Standing on the last spur of a chain of mountains, whose snow-crowned heights rise 9000 feet behind, it looks down proudly on the Vega and the City at its feet. The most perfect view is to be obtained from a small esplanade in front of the Church of San Nicolas, on the opposite hill of the Albaycin.*

Here, from an equal height, you see it across the valley of the Darro, as it stretches out its long lines of walls and towers, enclosing in their wide embrace the most singular remains of the past, and most striking evidences of changing dynasties and creeds. The fairy halls of luxurious Caliphs—the stately palace of an Emperor — the Mosque — the Church — the frowning keep of the turbaned Moor—the convent of the cowled Monk, all lie before you, to an extent, and with a diversity of historic association, that render it rather a city in miniature, than a fortress. Here, too, the surrounding scenery lends its most effective aid to make the whole a picture unsurpassed in beauty. The entire chain of the Sierra Nevada immediately behind, with its snowy summits, and its sides broken into precipitous ravines ; to the left, the white colonnades and miradors of the Generalife, a summer retreat of the Moor, perched high up among the verdant slopes of the Silla del Moro. Before you, sweeping round the edge of the vast

* See Frontispiece.

terrace which it covers, tower after tower of the Alhambra appears—the tower of the Infantas — of the Picos—with its ancient bearded battlements, the crumbling walls of the Casa Sanchez, the slight but elegant proportions of the Tocador as, fragile-looking, it hangs over the ravine, linked by a light and airy colonnade to the massive tower of Comares ; behind them the clustering roofs of the Moorish Palace, concealing, as is common with buildings of Eastern origin, beneath a plain and simple exterior, scenes of magic beauty and enchantment, fit abode for that luxurious court whose oriental barbarism was softened and yet dignified by constant intercourse with the knightly virtues of the Christian. The red walls, supported by buttresses, run on to the right, connecting the strong tower of Comares with the still loftier towers of the Alcazaba, which formed more especially the fortress. In the open space between, rises the palace of Charles V., whose grand unbroken outline presents from a distance a very imposing appearance, however much, from within the walls, it must be felt to be incongruous and out of place. The towers of the Alcazaba, itself an extensive citadel with gates and court-yards, terminate with the loftiest of all, the Torre de la Vela, which stands at the Western extremity commanding the whole country around. Beyond, and seemingly a part of it, the crimson walls of the Torres Bermejas form also a portion of the scene. From the base of the Vela, the hill falls abruptly into the town, which winds through the valley of the Darro, and spreads along the border to the Vega, where the eye may wander at large over a sea of verdure.

A more varied and splendid view can hardly be imagined ; and gorgeous it is at sunset, when the walls glow with a crimson light, and the snows of the Sierra are tinged with roseate hues. The rich deep tone of

colouring which pervades the Alhambra itself, the bright green of the trees which girdle it, the deep shadows of the valleys, the glorious lights of the distant mountains, all present a picture, which, both in form and colour, stands unsurpassed.

When the Gothic kingdom fell in 714, Granada, then inhabited by Jews, was a small town dependent on the great city of Elvira, which lay in the Vega at the foot of the Sierra of that name. Taken possession of by the Arabs from Damascus, who settled here when their countless tribes dispersed themselves through the Peninsula, its strong position and advantageous situation soon obtained for it a preference over Elvira, and Granada rose into importance as rapidly as the other declined. In the reign of the first Abdurrahman, A.D. 765, the Alcazaba, or fortress of the Albaycin, was commenced.

The country, distracted by internal dissensions, was in a state of constant agitation while the Caliphs ruled in Cordoba, until the reign of the third Abdurrahman, beneath whose sway, and that of his son, the whole land was blessed with peace, and the Arab dominion in the Peninsula attained the zenith of its glory. But intestine war would seem inseparable from the Moslem system. Struggles for the succession soon again broke out, and the dangerous expedient was sometimes adopted by the rival claimants, of bringing over from Africa numerous hordes to their assistance. Thus Granada received a formidable addition to its population in the warlike tribe of the Zeyrites, who had aided in placing Suleyman on the throne, and who were rewarded with the lordship of this territory. Their chief established himself in the Alcazaba, already mentioned, to which he made considerable additions, the quarter of the town in which it stands being still called the Barrio del Zeirite.

Four chiefs of this tribe (the last of whom, Ibn Habús, surrounded the city with walls) ruled over Granada, and had become almost independent sovereigns, when, on the close of the Umeyyah dynasty in 1031, the Arab empire was broken up into petty kingdoms. The Almoravides, who had come over from Africa to assist their Moslem brethren, finally subdued them, and Yusuf, their leader, seized upon Granada, A.D., 1090. He remained there some time, and greatly improved the city, as well as the irrigation of the country around, bringing water from the great fountain of Alfacar and other distant springs. The Almoravides were subdued (1148) by the Almohades, another African tribe, whose empire in turn was crushed on the fields of Tolosa (1212), a success of the Christian arms which was speedily followed by the victories of St. Ferdinand. The taking of Baza drove the inhabitants for shelter to Granada, and the quarter, which was assigned them, is from them called the Al-baicin. While Ferdinand was prosecuting his victories, two competitors were disputing for the Moslem sway ; but at length the death of Ibn Hud left Ibnu-l-ahmar without a rival, and establishing his court at Granada, he founded (1238) this the last of the Moorish kingdoms, which expired in 1492.

Mohammed Ibnu-l-ahmar was one of the greatest of the Mohammedan sovereigns. His valour in the field, his wisdom in council, his taste in the encouragement of Art, his energy and merciful disposition, won for him even the admiration of his foes. To him the Alhambra ows its origin. His peaceful hours were occupied in its erection ; and the Torre de la Vela, the towers of the Alcazaba or fortress portion, and the splendid Hall of the Ambassadors in the Tower of Comares, with its Court of Myrtles, attest his magnificence. His grandson, Mohammed III., though engaged constantly in

wars, added much to the adornment of Granada ; and the great Mosque of the Alhambra, which stood on the site of the present Church of Santa Maria, was built by him. In the reign of Ismail, the last of the direct line of Ibnu-l-ahmar, occurred the famous battle of Elvira (1319), in which the Infantas, Don Pedro and Don Juan of Castile, were slain, and the Christian arms sustained a terrible defeat. The body of the latter was carried to the Alhambra, and treated with all honour, and was finally sent under a strong escort to Cordoba to be delivered up to his father. Encouraged by this victory Ismail followed it up by many other successes. He attacked and took Martos ; but having carried off a Christian damsel, whose life had been saved by the son of the Moorish Governor of Algesiras, he raised an enemy whose revenge proved fatal to him. On his return to Granada, the injured lover, with a few other conspirators, attacked and murdered him in the very halls of the Alhambra.

His second son, Yusuf, was a worthy successor to the great Ibnu-l-ahmar. He sought in the blessings of tranquillity the welfare of his people, and devoted himself to the embellishment of his capital. He built the great Mosque in the city, the Gate of Justice which forms so worthy an entrance to the Alhambra, the fairy court of Lions, the Hall of the Two Sisters, the Hall of the Abencerrages, and the luxurious baths. These magnificent works, as well as many others erected by him, led the people to consider him as an alchymist, who converted all he touched into gold. He established a university, and encouraged arts and sciences. His example was followed by the nobles of Granada, who adorned their houses with courts and fountains, and covered the walls with elegant arabesques, "until Granada," says an Arab historian, "shone like a silver

vase set with emeralds and precious stones." He made admirable laws for the administration of justice and observance of public order. His beneficent reign was terminated by a madman, who stabbed him as he was leaving the Mosque. His descendants rapidly succeeded each other in the usual course of dethronement or assassination, their eternal strifes but giving additional strength to their ever watchful enemy, and hastening their own downfall. Mohammed Ibn Othman succeeded in 1455, and his reign, like the rest, was one constant scene of war and bloodshed. Driven to abdicate he closed his reign by the massacre of the chiefs opposed to him in that Court of the Lions which seemed built but for pleasure and enjoyment. This massacre is supposed, by some historians, to be the one of which the Abencerrages were the victims—a deed of bloodshed which has generally been ascribed to a later sovereign, but the true account of which seems enveloped in much obscurity. Civil wars and family feuds produced their necessary results. City after city were taken by the Christians, until, in the reign of Abn Abdillah, better known as Boabdil, the victorious arms of Ferdinand and Isabella planted in 1492 the standard of the Cross on the towers of the Alhambra, and the Moslem dominion in the Peninsula was finally overthrown, after a duration of over 700 years.

Although the kingdom of Granada was small, compared with that over which the Caliphs of Cordoba had formerly ruled, its sovereigns might look on it with pride. Within its boundary it possessed every natural advantage. Its mountains, plains, and sea-coasts were covered with a dense population, who, by their industry and love of agriculture, made the country appear one vast garden. The Court of Granada glittered with all the voluptuous magnificence of eastern potentates, and

the sovereigns of Castile might have envied the splendour of her palaces. The numerous harbours that indented her coasts were filled with the commerce of the east, and wealth poured in from every quarter. Her bazaars were full of the richest silks, which formed the principal exports of Malaga and Almeria. Literature was cultivated, and the sciences studied with diligence and success. Her aristocracy was composed of some of the noblest of the Eastern tribes, and their bravery and chivalrous character shone to advantage even beside the Ponce de Leons, Córdobas and Manriques. Many a generous and knightly deed of high-bred courtesy is recorded of them: and yet they and their people passed away as though they had been but transitory dwellers, mere aliens, in the land. Representatives of another race and another creed, they stood isolated from the nations around them, who were only bent on their extermination; and their own domestic feuds and dissensions effectually seconded the desires of their enemies.

But with the downfall of the Crescent ends the greatness of Granada. The sun of courtly favour seemed to shine upon her for a time in the reign of Charles V.; but the gleam was transitory, and passed away: and Granada has sunk into a mere provincial town. The Moor who loved her was taken from her; and now she sits lonely in her widowhood, pointing to the Alhambra, all she now possesses, to convince the wanderer from other lands, that the story of her past greatness is no idle tale.

To give a minute account of the Alhambra, which has been so often and so eloquently described, seems worse than a twice-told tale. The poetic fancy, and oriental imagery of Washington Irving, and the more accurate and elaborate details of Mr. Ford, have rendered it

familiar to the majority of readers ; and yet it is not possible, in writing of Granada, to omit some description of what constitutes its most striking feature and principal attraction.

We have already viewed it from the hill of the Albaycin, and there obtained a general impression of the exterior. Before ascending to it, it may be well to refer to the relative position of the ground which it occupies. Of the numerous streams which the neighbouring mountains send down to the plain, the principal are the Xenil and the Darro. These, though wide asunder at their sources, gradually approach, until, for more than a league before they reach the Vega, they run westward through two valleys of great beauty, divided by a long single ridge called the Cerro del Sol. At the termination of the hill they unite their waters, and flow together across the open plain. It is here—at the junction of these streams—at the entrance of these valleys,—on the margin of the Vega, that the city of Granada is happily situated. The Cerro del Sol does not continue the same elevation quite to its extremity. Before reaching Granada at a point called the Silla del Moro, it slopes downward for a little, and then spreads out into two table-lands or terraces of considerable extent, with a narrow and thickly planted valley between them, falling gently to the town. On the higher slopes is situated the Generalife,—on the northern terrace stands the Alhambra, with the Darro flowing below ; on the other the Torres Bermejas, and the remains of the convent of the Martires ; and up the gentle acclivity between are the shady avenues and paseos that lead to the Alhambra.

In ascending from the town, you proceed from the Plaza Nueva, up a street called the Calle de Gomeles, so called from an African tribe of that name : at the

end of this street you reach a wretched specimen of architecture, an imitation of a Moorish gateway, built in the reign of Charles V., where the town ends, and the precincts of the fortress begin. High above you, on the left, is the Torre de la Vela, — on the right the Torres Bermejas ; and in front, a wide avenue, in the deepest shade, and admirably kept, leads by a gradual succession of slopes to the terraces above. By a shorter but more precipitous approach you may ascend the wooded bank upon the left ; and proceed at once to the principal entrance,—the Gate of Justice. A magnificent horse-shoe arch, nearly forty feet in height, admits you into a square tower of massive proportions. A few feet within is an inner and smaller arch of similar design, protected by wooden gates cased in iron, while the intermediate space in the roof above is open for purposes of defence and greater security. On the key-stone of the outer arch is engraved a gigantic hand, with a portion of the arm ; and on the inner is traced the form of a key. Many and fanciful have been the interpretations given to these two emblems ; but the hand is now generally considered to have been a talisman against the evil eye, and all descriptions of witchcraft ; while the key represented the power conferred on Mohammed of closing the gates of heaven. The device of a key was common on the banners of the Moors in Andalucia. Tradition, however, tells that they had a saying that the towers of the Alhambra would stand, till the hand and key were united. Over the key, the Azulejo-work has been broken through, and a niche formed to receive a statue of the Virgin, an unsuitable and inappropriate site for such a shrine.

The passage through the tower turns at right angles to make it more difficult of access. A road between high walls leads into a large open square, called the

Plaza de los Algibes. On entering it, to the right is a small tower, the Puerta del Vino, supposed by some to have been a mihrab or small chapel, but which, with more probability, seems to have been the inner gate, through whose double and highly-finished arches admission was given to the citadel within.

The Plaza de los Algibes is so called from its surface covering two large reservoirs which receive the waters of the Darro. They are each about 125 feet long and 25 broad. The water is much esteemed by many for its freshness and quality. In the corner of the Plaza is a draw-well, by means of which it is raised. In summer a wide awning is here erected, beneath which crowds of idlers lounge away the day, and noisy aguadors are ever replenishing their jars to supply the thirsty town below.

To the left of the Plaza rise the lofty towers of the Alcazaba or fortress of the Alhambra; and to the right the huge structure which Charles V. erected on the ruins of the winter palace of the Moors, with money wrung from that most cruelly treated portion of his subjects.

Coming to Granada after his marriage with Isabel of Portugal, he became enraptured with the glorious situation of the Alhambra, and gave orders for the erection of a palace which should outshine the fairy courts beside it. The Moors having been compelled to pay down 80,000 ducats to exempt themselves from the rigorous laws which Charles had enacted forbidding them to wear their costume, etc., he devoted part of the amount to the carrying out of his favourite plan. The execution of it was confided to Pedro Machuca, who having studied in Italy, was one of the first to introduce the Italian or Græco-Romano style of architecture into Spain. The structure consists of a

large square of 240 feet, of which two sides are richly ornamented, as well as a portion of the others. The whole building is very heavy, and overloaded with ornament. A large circular patio forms the interior, supported by a double row of columns, one above the other, and looks more fit for a bull-ring than a kingly residence, being out of all proportion to the building, and leaving only a narrow space between it and the outer walls for a few rooms. Want of funds or royal caprice seems to have prevented its completion, it never having been roofed, and still remaining a mere shell. The entire edifice is quite out of keeping with the Moslem citadel in which it stands. Elsewhere it might have been entitled to admiration, but here it only injures the beauty of the whole by its strange incongruity. Monopolising the scene, the traveller looks in vain for any signs of that Moorish palace of which he has heard so much, and can hardly repress a feeling of disappointment when he finds that he has to pass through a small gateway almost hidden under the shadow of this enormous pile, to arrive at the object of his search. The simplicity of the exterior of the Moorish palace is not, however, out of keeping with the character of its architecture. In the principal houses of Damascus, a poor exterior encloses courts and halls worthy of the descriptions in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." Constructed only for the enjoyment of the inmates, they are designed rather to ward off than allure the admiration of the passers-by. The lofty rooms, with but few windows, exclude the heat and light of day, and open into inner courts, where waters ever flowing from marble fountains refresh and cool the air. The mean exterior only renders more striking the gorgeousness within; and so also in the Alhambra: when the small gateway

alluded to is opened, the scene which bursts upon the traveller's view, enchants and surprises, by its contrast with that on which he has just been gazing.

Instead of being surrounded by massive walls, he finds himself in courts of small and delicate proportions. The very size is disappointing; the whole seems like an architectural plaything; but it soon captivates by its elegance. The countless patterns which form the lace-like tracery on the walls—the slender columns which cluster round the courts—the exquisite work of the ceilings, all speak of the poetic temperament and voluptuous habits of those who dwelt there. And thus, the Alhambra presents the very type of the people who erected it; stern and formidable for strife without, soft and effeminate in peace within; it breathes the spirit of the warlike, though pleasure-loving and indolent followers of Mohammed.

The court into which you first enter is called the Patio de los Arrayanes (Court of the Myrtles). It is about 140 feet long by 80 wide; a large pond, set in the marble pavement, occupies the centre, along the sides of which are carefully trimmed hedges of myrtle, while small fountains sprinkle their cooling waters around. At the end nearest the door which gives admittance, a colonnade of two stories runs along, under which was the principal entrance to the palace, now all blocked up by the massive walls of the adjoining building. At the opposite end, passing under a similar colonnade, you cross an elegant lofty corridor into the Hall of the Ambassadors, which occupies the Tower of Comares. In the wall on either side, as you enter, are two small niches for placing the slippers. The room, which is of large and beautiful proportions—a square of 37 feet—is lighted by nine windows, three pierced in each of

the projecting sides of the tower, midway between the floor and summit of the dome-like roof, which rises over 70 feet above; and directly beneath them, on a level with the floor, corresponding windows open out under arches, through the vast thickness of the walls, upon balconies overhanging the Darro, and presenting on every side the most splendid views. The walls are covered with that elaborate fret-work in stucco, in which the Moors excelled, and scrolls of Arabic character everywhere meet the eye, expressive of the glory of God and the vanity of human things. The dome above is formed of minute pieces of carved wood, tinted of various dyes, and admirably wrought together. The floor, now of coarse tiles, was once of marble, with a fountain in the centre; and above this floor, for several feet, the walls are faced with azulejos, or painted tiles, in endless variety of pattern and hue. It was in this hall that the Moslem kings gave audience and held their state receptions.

From the Hall of the Ambassadors proceeding through a dark passage on the right, whose walled-up pillars have converted into a gloomy corridor what was once an airy colonnade, you issue forth upon an open gallery sustained by delicate marble columns, which conducts to a small square tower, whose diminutive proportions are in striking contrast with the massive pile of Comares. It is commonly called the Tocador, or dressing-room of the Queen, rather an *al fresco* situation for such an apartment, and derives the epithet, it is said, from the purposes for which it was subsequently rather than originally designed.

Overhanging the valley of the Darro, its sides all open to the enchanting scenery around, there appears something sublime in the idea of selecting such a spot for prayer and religious meditation. Here the Moorish

kings had their mihrab or private oratory ; here they worshipped God, in the midst of a temple of which He alone could be the architect. Fallen into decay after the conquest, it was partly restored by the Emperor, and on the visit of Philip V. to Granada, was fitted up as a dressing-room for the Queen and painted in fresco in the Italian style. Beneath the Arabic inscriptions, appropriate to its original design, are delineated towns and sea-ports, water-nymphs and sirens, the achievements of Phaeton and the Cardinal Virtues, all, according to Spanish authority, "de buen gusto."

From the tocador, a suite of modernised rooms, with heavy wooden ceilings, covered with the "Plus ultra" of Charles V.—that eternal motto which meets the eye everywhere—leads into the beautiful apartment called the Mirador de Lindaraja. The profusion of ornament bestowed here is perfectly astonishing, and it is equally surprising how the beauty of the general design is increased, not marred, by the elaborate minuteness of the details. From an alcove, the walls of which shine with azulejos, and attract and delight the eye with the most delicate traceries, the double arches of a Moorish window look out upon a marble fountain, sparkling amidst orange trees and myrtles ; whilst within, the view embraces a vista to which the pencil alone could do justice. Before you, the Sala de las dos Hermanas, with its lofty dome-shaped roof, suspending in studied and most skilful confusion pendulous fret-work, as graceful as stalactites, and reflecting the same prismatic hues—its polished marble floor—its walls of arabesques, its lofty arches, opening out upon the Court of the Lions, through whose graceful columns is visible the corresponding and equally splendid Hall of the Abencerrages.

The long perspective of the receding arches, the infinite variety of lines and colours, all flowing and blending into each other, and the character of luxurious elegance which pervades the entire, impress the beholder with feelings of the liveliest pleasure and unbounded admiration of the taste and skill, that with such simple materials, could produce effects so beautiful. At regular distances along the walls of the Sala de las dos Hermanas and the centre-points from which radiate the complicated tracery, are inserted golden shields, on which in an azure bend is inscribed the motto of Ibnu-l-ahmar, "God alone is the conqueror;" In all the principal halls and apartments of the palace, this shield is everywhere to be seen.

Passing into the Court of the Lions the whole of this far-famed patio now lies before you. A graceful colonnade of Moorish arches, supported by 128 columns of white marble, 11 ft. in height, surrounds a court 116 ft. by 66 ft. At each extremity, a pavilion of light and elegant design projects into the patio, sustained by groupings of columns linked together by arches of more elaborate workmanship than those at the sides, presenting the stalactitic and coloured ornaments that characterise the hall through which we passed. The pavement beneath them is of polished marble, and jets of water in the midst lend additional lightness to the scene. In the centre of the court, the large fountain, from which it takes its name, deserves to be noticed, rather for its celebrity than its beauty. Supported by twelve lions, whose pigmy forms appear inadequate to the weight, it is too heavy in design to harmonise with the aerial architecture around, and the animals themselves, more like cats than the monarchs of the forest, afford a striking instance of the failure of the Moslem sculptor, when he ventured to transgress the

mandate of his prophet. Formerly, all the space within the court was a garden; but it was discovered that the water with which it was irrigated, was gradually undermining the foundations, and the plants have been all removed and a tiled pavement is being substituted.

The constant intercourse with the Christians modified in many respects the manners of the Mahommedans, and the lions are not the only violation here of the law prohibiting the representation of living things. Off the corridor at the eastern end, are three apartments very highly finished, but now neglected, the ceilings of which are ornamented with paintings, the colours still fresh and brilliant. The centre one is painted on a golden ground, and represents a divan with ten Moors seated in judgment; whence the room is called the Sala del Tribunal. Those on each side pourtray various romantic incidents; combats, ladies in the power of magicians, and other subjects of the age of chivalry. Ascribed by some to native, by others to Christian artists, they bear evident signs of having been executed in the infancy of art; and the knights on horseback, as tall as the towers of the Alhambra itself, exhibit about the same correct ideas of perspective, as are to be found in the old pictures in Froissart's Chronicles and the illuminations of the earlier manuscripts.

Standing in the Court of the Lions, the spectator is astonished at the fragile appearance of the structure around him. The slightest shock would seem sufficient to destroy it; and yet nearly five hundred years have passed since those slender columns and those delicate traceries were first exposed to the vicissitudes of time. It is, however, now fast decaying, and the numerous iron bars, which have lately been clumsily inserted across from arch to arch, though they may retard the

ruin, sadly impair the charm of effect. The Alhambra might still be preserved in almost its pristine beauty, if adequate skill and a spirit of liberality were brought to bear upon a work, the success of which would redound so much to the honour of the Spanish people ; but the restorations, instead of being entrusted to first-rate artisans, are more economically done by convicts, who destroy more than they preserve, and the clanking of whose chains by no means enhances the enjoyment of the scene.

On the side of the court, opposite to the Hall of the Two Sisters, a few steps lead up to the beautiful Sala de los Abencerrages, whose dreadful massacre is supposed to have taken place at the fountain which occupies the centre of the room. With implicit faith does the guide show the traveller the small side door, out of which they came, one by one, to receive the fatal stroke, and points to the blood-stained mark which still attests the tragedy. It would be a labour equally vain and thankless for criticism to pronounce such tales fictitious, and prove that the horrors of the fountain, and the tender legend of the Cypress of the Generalife, existed only in the romantic pages of Hyta. We cherish errors which amuse or fascinate ; and who would be undeceived in such a scene? Of nearly similar proportions and design to the opposite Sala, it is unnecessary to refer to its details. The pendulous groinings of its sparkling dome, the lace-like walls, the arched alcoves, all are of equal finish and of equal beauty. Returning into the Court of the Lions, you issue out under the western pavilion, and find yourself again in the Court of Myrtles, opposite to the gate by which you entered, having thus completed the circuit of the Moorish palace.

Beautiful at all hours of the day, it is still more

lovely when seen by moonlight. When all is still and silent, when no sound disturbs the almost overpowering tranquillity of the scene, the imagination may indulge its fancies unrestrained, and people these courts once more with their former inmates. When the bright moonlight glances on the fairy columns, the ravages of time, the barbarous alterations of the Christian sovereigns, the modern changes which impair what still survives, all merge in the deep dark shadows which conceal the sad realities that dispel the visions of the past. Nothing is seen but the beautiful outline of the whole, appearing rather the work of genii than of men, and looking as if the slightest breath would make it vanish. This is the time, when memory unbidden recalls the old ballads, and conjures up visions of the actors and the scenes of Moorish story.

Then, too, is the moment to enjoy the view, looking down from the windows of the Tower of Comares upon the tranquil city, with its countless lights glittering in the darkness ; a lower sky, shining as it were, in rivalry of the one above—the " cielo bajo," as the Spaniards call it. We may gaze upon it in its mysterious shadows until, forgetful of the present, we expect to hear the gentle murmur sounding from minaret to minaret, " There is but one God, and Mahommed is his Prophet." But our dream is soon dispelled, the bells from numerous churches break on the stilness of the night, and the loud watch-cry of " Ave Maria Purissima," recalls the struggles of the Catholic against the enemy of his faith ; and although the imagination is deprived of so rich a source of poetry and romance, still in our hearts we rejoice in the triumph of the Christian arms, and sympathise with those who endured so much to plant the Standard of the Cross on the towers of the unbeliever.

Having now seen the interior of the Moorish palace, we may wander through the remainder of the vast enclosure which stands within the walls. Returning to the Plaza de los Algibes, we cross the square to the Alcazaba, which occupies the extremity of the terrace and overhangs the town. Through a wall of great height and thickness, guarded by three massive towers, now almost in ruin, we enter by an old mouldering gateway into an extensive courtyard, filled with weeds and rubbish. To the right are two small inner yards and towers, which are still kept in habitable repair, and serve as prisons for convicts, who crowd the place, and are employed in any works which may be going on within the walls. In front, lofty and conspicuous, rises the Torre de la Vela, the principal tower of the Alhambra, on the summit of which the Conde de Tendilla first waved the banner of Castile, when he took possession of Granada in the name of Ferdinand and Isabella, the 2nd of January, 1492. Above the long inscription which records the event, a large bell is suspended, which rings at stated intervals during the night, giving notice to the husbandmen in the Vega of the hours as they pass, and when in turn they may open the sluices for the irrigation of their fields.

The view from this tower is one of the finest in Granada. Looking eastward, in the foreground are the red crumbling walls of the Alcazaba ; beyond, the various structures of the Alhambra, backed by the rich foliage and white colonnades of the Generalife, above which rises the brown crest of the Silla del Moro, now deserted and uncultivated, though formerly covered with palaces and gardens. Below the Silla del Moro, on the opposite side of the ravine through which flows the Darro, are seen, embowered in trees, the large buildings of the Monte Sacro, a college which still

preserves its possessions, notwithstanding the modern confiscations which have swept away all monastic property. The rounded barren hills, forming the other side of the valley, gradually descend towards the town, the church of San Miguel el Alto presenting a striking object on one of the summits immediately above the Albaycin, which rises opposite to the Alhambra, surmounted by the still frowning ruins of its rival fortress. In the distance, bounding the horizon, the eye wanders in succession over a vast amphitheatre ; the rocky height of Moclin overhanging its mountain-pass, the loftier summit of Parapanda, the Sierra of Monte Frio, and the gorge of Loja, where the Genil issues forth on its way to unite its waters with those of the Guadalquiver ; the long range connecting these with the Sierra Tejeda, which rises 6000 feet behind Alhama ; the undulating hills which cluster round the spot where tradition tells that the last king of Granada bade farewell to the paradise he was leaving ; the mountains behind Padul, which gradually expand to the gigantic proportions of the Picacho de Veleta, whose snowy outline is relieved by the brown and rugged peaks of the lower hills, and these again by the luxuriant verdure of the valley of the Genil. Within this boundary of mountains lies the Vega, dotted over with villages and farm-houses ; covered thick with olive-yards and waving fields of corn and hemp ; while a marked streak of foliage stretching across it denotes the course of the Genil. Santa Fe, La Zubia, Alhendin, are all historic names ; each spot of ground has been bedewed with the blood of contending armies. In front of Parapanda, and standing out from the hills in the background, rise the bold volcanic peaks of the Sierra Elvira, the site of the ancient city of Illiberis, and the scene of many a hard-fought contest. A little beyond

is the bridge of Pinos, where Columbus was overtaken by the messenger of Isabella, when, in disgust with the delays and disappointments he experienced from the wavering conduct of the cautious Ferdinand, he was proceeding to offer to some other monarch the glory and the profit of his inspired projects. And still further on, is the plain of Soto de Roma, the gift of the Spanish nation to Wellington. At your feet, on one side are the winding streets, and squares, and churches of Granada ; on the other, the groves of the Alhambra, and beyond them the remains of the ruined convent of the Martires. Wherever the eye wanders, the scene is ever varying and ever beautiful. The ramparts beneath the Torre de la Vela have been laid out in gardens, and in them there are some magnificent old vines. Here also grows a tall cypress, which forms, from every direction around, a most conspicuous object, being visible high above the walls from every point from which the Alhambra can be viewed.

Leaving the Alcazaba, and proceeding along the side of the square by which you entered, you pass a hideous house, more nearly resembling a Methodist chapel than anything else, which has just been erected close to the Puerta del Vino on one of the finest sites in the place —an admirable specimen of modern Spanish taste. Passing by the southern front of Charles the Fifth's palace, and leaving on your right hand the gate which has been erected as a carriage entrance, you find yourself in a labyrinth of squalid wretched-looking houses, now occupying the locality where once stood the splendid residences of the officers and household of the Moorish sovereigns. From here, following the circle of the walls, you pass in succession the ruins of the towers which were blown up by the French in 1812. One of these is the so called Siete Suelos, through a gate in

which (ever since closed up) Boabdil is said to have gone forth to surrender his capital and kingdom. The remaining towers, skirting the ravine which separates the Alhambra from the gardens of the Generalife, still present traces of their former splendour. The Torre de las Infantas, with its beautiful arches and arabesque ornaments, is now blackened with smoke and the squalid habits of the poor families who have been allowed to live there ; so also, with the towers del Candil, de las Cautivas, and de los Picos, whose richly fretted walls and windows, thick with dust, and covered with wretched little prints of saints and martyrs, present a melancholy contrast between their past and present destiny. The paths too to these towers are in keeping with their condition ; the cactus and the aloe choke up the way, the vines twine their branches over the crumbling walls, along which the ivy creeps in wild luxuriance, and all around is ruin and desolation.

Before leaving the Alhambra through the *Puerta de Hierro,* a gate at the foot of the Torre del Pico, which leads down the ravine, if we return towards the Casa Real, we pass a house belonging to a family named Teruel, which bears many traces of Arabian architecture. The views from the windows overhanging the Darro are perfectly enchanting. In this quarter are several large gardens which occupy a considerable space within the walls ; and here also is a small Alameda, close to the Santa Maria de la Alhambra, an edifice still used as the parish church. The convent of San Francisco is now converted into a storehouse and magazine by the military authorities. It was built by Tendilla, the first governor of the Alhambra ; and here were laid the bodies of Ferdinand and Isabella, and of Gonzalvo de Cordoba, before they

were removed to their final resting-places in the city of Granada.

Such is the Alhambra in the present day; and being such, it is indeed wonderful that the sovereigns of Spain should never have established here a summer residence. Had they but treasured up and preserved the Moorish structure, which might easily have been done, they would have had a palace such as no sovereign in Europe possessed—alone in the originality of its design, and unequalled for the beauty of its situation.

SPANISH FUNERAL.

CHAPTER IV.

¡ Verdes plantas de Genil,
Fresca y regalada Vega,
Dulce recreacion de damas,
De los hombres gloria immensa !
¡ Del cielo luciente estrella !
¡ Granada bella !

OLD BALLAD.

THE GENERALIFE—THE CEMETERY—FUNERALS—GARDENS—THE TOWN—VIRGEN DE LAS AUGUSTIAS—VALLEY OF THE GENIL—CUARTO REAL—ROYAL CHAPEL—THE CATHEDRAL—CANO—PAINTED SCULPTURE—THE BIBARAMBLA—FESTIVAL OF THE CORPUS—SAN GERONIMO—SAN JUAN DE DIOS—CARTUJA—SAN MIGUEL EL ALTO—GIPSY CAVES—VALLEY OF THE DARRO—GOLD DIGGERS—FESTIVAL DAYS—THE NARVAJA—AGUADORS—WATER-EPICURES.

ON leaving the Puerta de Hierro, you enter a picturesque ravine, where the towers just described form a perfect study for the painter. A road to the left descends precipitously into the valley of the Darro, and a small pathway opposite leads to a side entrance of the Generalife. The road, however, up the ravine is the most attractive : on one side are the old walls covered with ivy and wild fig-trees ; on the other, steep banks

clothed with flowers and foliage ; and at the extremity it is spanned by a fine old arch, serving as an aqueduct to carry into the Alhambra the waters of the Darro, which for this purpose were diverted from their original channel at a distance of several miles up the valley, and thence conducted along the sides of the hills by a succession of acequias or watercourses. Passing under the *Fuente Peña*, you find yourself at the extremity of the great central walk of the Alhambra, and a few paces further lead to the principal entrance to the Generalife. A long approach through richly cultivated orchards conducts to an avenue of cypresses, where the trailing vines climb from tree to tree, forming with their bright green leaves a beautiful contrast to the dark hue of the cypress.

The Generalife, as it now stands, is of limited extent, and the little that does remain has been so barbarously whitewashed, that it is difficult to distinguish the lace-like ornaments of the stucco, or the delicate inscriptions which cover the walls. A long gallery with open arches presents a most enchanting view of the country—the Alhambra itself forming the principal object in the foreground. Built as a place of recreation for the Mahommedan princes, it seems indeed the very abode of love and pleasure. The waters of the Darro rushing through the gardens, fountains sparkling amid shrubs and flowers, walks and bowers of the deepest shade, lofty miradors commanding on every side the loveliest prospects—all render it for a summer residence a perfect paradise. In the garden behind the modern rooms, rises the far-famed cypress already alluded to ; but however doubtful the authenticity of the tale attached to it, travellers will still continue to deprive it of its bark, and carry away their souvenirs of the noble Abencerrage and the frail sultana.

In one of the rooms are preserved some wretched pictures, one of which was for some time supposed to be that of the *Rey chico* (Boabdil), but an inscription proves it to be that of Aben Hut, one of the Kings of Granada, from whom is descended the Marquis of Campotejar-Gentili, the present owner of the Generalife. The family, however, does not reside here. Having become more Italian than Spanish, they live in Genoa, while their property is in the hands of an agent or administrador.

A mirador crowns the verdant slopes, and by a side door opens out on the Silla del Moro. The summit of this hill is a mass of ruins, the remains of the fortifications erected and afterwards blown up by the French. Barren and desolate, it now produces but a few ears of stunted corn, where once the skill and labour of the Moor made gardens bloom. Here were the summer Palace of Darlarocca, and the far-famed Alijares, alluded to in the well-known ballad in which John II. is described as seeking information of the beauties of Granada, when he lay encamped with his troops at the foot of Elvira. Several large stone reservoirs and excavations of vast depth attest how these hills were once irrigated, but they are now dried up, and all is waste ; for in this country, where water fails, the earth soon becomes a desert.

Proceeding along the side of the hill by a path skirting the orchards of the Generalife, you come in view of the Cemetery of Granada ; and mournful and desolate it appears with the wild Sierra rising around it. A large wall encloses a perfect wilderness of tombs, arranged in most admired disorder, without one single flower or shrub to evince some care or sympathy between the living and the last resting-place of the

dead. It looks cold and heartless, suiting well with a peculiar shade in the character of a people, who seem to have less feeling of affection and respect for the remains of the dead than any other nation perhaps in the world. Having passed many hours drawing on the road to the Cemetery, I had many opportunities of seeing their funeral processions, and I must confess that the manner in which they are generally conducted inspired me with sentiments of disgust and horror. The clergy, as well as the friends and relatives, seldom accompany the remains beyond the precincts of the town. The funeral mass and service having been performed in the church, they generally separate, and a few common or hired men with torches in their hands convey the body to its destination. It is borne along with the face uncovered. Round the heads of young girls, wreaths of flowers are twined, and children under seven years of age have bunches of Everlastings, or as they call them here "the Flower of Death" (Flor de la Muerte), placed in their hands. After death they are laid out in great state, and in their best and richest dresses, in a room, on the ground floor, which is all hung with black : a temporary altar is arranged, and numbers of lights are placed around the body : the windows are thrown open, and every one may look in through the reja as he passes. How strangely the Spaniards view those things the following anecdote will show, which was related to me by one who was present at the scene. A young lady, who was dying of decline, received, according to the usual custom, a visit from all her friends, that they might take leave of her ; and the conversation turned upon the dress she was to wear, when her body was to lie in state. Amongst other things, she said, she did not like the idea of being laid out in a room on the ground floor, it was so damp in

winter. "Never mind"—said her father, with the most serious face imaginable—"we will put a brasero in the room, and it will be well aired." Formerly both men and women used to be dressed in the habit of some religious order, whichever they preferred when dying, but since the suppression of the monastic orders this custom is no longer in practice. The body, duly arranged, is placed in an open shell, and carried to the cemetery: the ghastly burden often knocking to and fro with the unseemly haste with which it is borne; while the jest and laughter and unceasing conversation of those accompanying it show with how little feeling of religious awe the presence of the dead inspires them. Sometimes they will even place it on the ground to rest, and having lighted their cigars take it up again and continue their pilgrimage. Before the grave is closed, whether the bodies be placed in niches in the walls or in the ground, quicklime is always thrown over those even of the wealthiest, and when, some years afterwards, those places are again opened for a similar purpose, a few calcined bones alone are found remaining of their former occupants.

Although the remains of the dead are not treated here with that respect and solemnity to which we are accustomed, the Andalucians are very particular in all the etiquette and outward forms of mourning. After the death of a relative, they receive, for nine days, the condoling visits of their friends. Dressed in deep mourning, it was usual for the family to sit and discourse on the virtues of the deceased, and give to their visitors, as they entered, the details of the melancholy event: but this custom, like many old Spanish habits, is gradually going out. The nearest relatives are giving up receiving at these *duelos*, being represented by some friend or distant relative; and

now, it is the etiquette neither to look very wretched nor introduce painful topics of conversation; so those meetings have become rather a lively reunion for the discussion of the news and gossip of the day. On the anniversary of the death of any wealthy person, they celebrate what are called the *Honras*. A catafalque is erected in the centre of the church, all hung with black and magnificently lighted, and a long service is performed, to which all the friends and relatives are invited.

Returning to the *Paseos* or walks of the Alhambra, a road to the left leads to the southern terrace, called the *Campo de los Martires*, the grounds of which were formerly in the possession of the Carmelite monks. Here a small hermitage was erected to commemorate the spot where the keys of the city were delivered to the Conde de Tendilla; and afterwards, a monastery was built upon the site. The buildings have all been destroyed, and the lands now belong to a lay proprietor. A handsome aqueduct on arches, conveying the water for irrigation, runs through the grounds, which boast of a most singular and beautiful tree, a species of Cypress, said to be the only one of the kind in Europe. The slopes of this hill are covered with *carmenes*, surrounded by gardens.

The word "gardens," as spoken of here, must not convey to the reader's mind those ideas of beauty and cultivation, such as they might be supposed in an almost tropical climate to possess, filled with varieties of exquisite shrubs and flowers. They are badly cultivated and badly kept, and have flowers only of the most common description, such as would hardly obtain admission into an English cottage garden. Their own natural fruit-trees, the vine, the fig, and pomegranate, lend to them their chief attraction; and although they

often bloom with a profusion of roses, yet it is rather from the superabundant richness of the soil, than from any care or culture bestowed on them. It is true that a showy flower is always highly prized as an ornament for the hair, and there is no lack of flower-pots in the balconies, where the carnation, the cactus, and their favourite *Flor del Moro* (as the Granadinos call a beautiful scarlet mesembryanthemum, which in the sunlight is perfectly dazzling) receive a due supply of water ; but as a people, they have no idea of floriculture, nor taste, nor interest about it, nor the slightest appreciation for the beauties of Nature, as that expression is generally understood. Shut up in their towns, they have never lived in, and never yet learned to enjoy the charms of the country. As to any enthusiasm about beautiful views, or undergoing any fatigue or trouble in their pursuit, such nonsensical things are classed among the other eccentric fancies of the very mad English. A person drawing for the mere love of art is hardly considered in his senses. I have often been asked, for how much I would sell my drawings, and when I replied they were merely done for amusement, a smile of mingled incredulity and pity convinced me I was esteemed not over wise or candid : and upon one occasion in the Court of the Lions, while copying the arabesques, some inquisitive visitors came to the conclusion that I was painting new patterns for fans ! Beneath such a sun, and with the abundance of water which here there is always at command, a gardener of skill and taste might convert the grounds around these villas into an earthly paradise. They are seldom occupied by their owners, who only pay them an occasional visit, merely to spend the evening ; and are generally let to persons who make a handsome profit by selling the strawberries and other fruit. The

occupants are extremely civil and obliging, and whenever I have gone into a carmen to ask leave to draw, I have been always received with the greatest warmth and courtesy.

The Andalucians are a light-hearted, happy people; nor can they well be otherwise in a climate where poverty is divested of half its horrors. Compared with the position of many of our own peasantry, how different is the life of the poorest here—how trifling his sufferings! Content with bread and fruit, an abundant supply of which a few hours' labour will secure, with a glass of water and a paper cigar, he bids defiance to care; and even though he may not have a roof to cover him, it is no great hardship to sleep beneath the sky of Andalucia.

The city of Granada is in many places very picturesque. None of the streets are wide, while the majority are mere lanes, barely sufficient to allow two people to pass. The lower windows, as in all Spanish towns, are guarded by rejas; and the many-coloured awnings over the balconies give them a very gay appearance. Many of the houses are painted on the outside; but the generality have as yet escaped that fatal mania for whitewash which has become the great leveller of all architectural beauty in the south of Spain. The most picturesque portion of the town is along the course of the Darro, the sides of which abound in all sorts of quaint-looking buildings overhanging the river. Flowing down through a romantic ravine, it runs under the precipitous hill upon which the Alhambra stands, having on the other side the steep streets and gardens of the Albaycin, and seems to have forced with difficulty its torn channel through the various structures piled upon its banks. All down the valley are scattered carmenes most charmingly

situated, from which—especially from one surrounded by trelliced vine-walks—may be seen one of the finest views of the Alhambra, the crimson towers crowning the verdant heights above. Down through the narrow pass runs the river amid quaint old houses and churches —here the remains of a Moorish arch, there an old bridge or two still entire, all perfect studies for the painter.

Following the stream, the space begins to widen; there, on the right hand, stands the *Chancilleria*, or law courts, a very handsome building commenced in 1584. A flight of steps leads into a magnificent patio, whence a marble staircase conducts to a lofty corridor, out of which the several courts open. The staircase is said to have been erected under the following circumstance :—a descendant of Fernan de Pulgar happening to enter the court while a cause was proceeding, and having a right, as a Grandee, to remain covered in the presence of the sovereign, he refused to take off his hat in the presence of the judges. For such disrespect the indignant functionaries inflicted on him a heavy fine, which he declined to pay, and appealed to the king. Philip II., delighted, doubtless, at an opportunity of humbling the overweening pride of the nobility, decided, that although in his own presence a Grandee had such a privilege, no man had a right to remain covered in the presence of justice, represented in the person of his judges. He ordered the full fine to be paid, and handed over for the completion of the staircase of the *Chancilleria*. Here, the Darro disappears under the Plaza Nueva, which is arched beneath for that purpose. Nothing, in its own peculiar style, can be more picturesque than this square. At night, when its numerous stalls are lighted up, and the aguadors are plying about, and crowds of people stand

chattering in groups, it presents a most animated and characteristic appearance. From this square three principal streets diverge—the Calle de Gomeles leads up to the Alhambra; to the right a long street runs to the Puerta de Elvira; and in front is the Zacatin, the Bond Street of Granada. The river here becomes visible again; the old houses, forming one side of the Zacatin, hang over its bed, and present a succession of views that become more picturesque as you proceed; until, after passing the ruined convent of Carmel, it turns to the left, and flowing through the Carrera del Darro, it mingles its waters with those of the Genil at the southern entrance of the town. The Darro, generally speaking, is a mere brook, its waters having been carried off, far up the valley, for the purpose of irrigation; but at times, after a great fall of rain in the mountains, it rushes down, a raging torrent, threatening to overflow its banks, and inundate the town. It is apprehended that, on some such occasion, it may burst up through the Plaza Nueva, and do considerable mischief, making a temporary channel along the Zacatin.

The Theatre stands in an open square on the Carrera of the Darro. In the plaza in front of it, is an unfinished monument to commemorate the unhappy fate of Mariana de Pineda. The history of this unfortunate lady is one of those many tragic episodes with which the revolutions in Spain have so abounded. Residing in Granada, the widow of a respectable proprietor of Huescar, she was suspected of maintaining a secret correspondence with the refugees at Gibraltar, by the assistance of one of her servants, who had formerly served under Riego. The charge was never brought home to her, and suspicion died away; but she was again implicated in the escape of one of the

political prisoners, D. Fernando Sotomayor, who left his prison disguised as a Capuchin friar. The discovery in her house of a revolutionary flag, which was said to have been embroidered by her orders, afforded sufficient pretext for her being thrown into prison. She was soon after condemned to death ; and, on the 26th of May, 1831, was executed in the Triunfo, outside the Puerta de Elvira. Like Torrijos, she was afterwards esteemed a martyr to the Constitutional cause ; and a monument erected to her memory. It is unfinished ; for the pedestal is there, but not the statue which was intended to adorn it—possibly, from want of funds, but more probably from some new change in the political atmosphere.

From the Darro, in front of the theatre, a broad street, lined with double rows of trees, leads to the Alameda of the Genil. Here stands the Church of the Patron Saint of Granada, the "*Virgen de las Angustias*," conspicuous with its two lofty towers. It contains an image of the Virgin, with a dead Christ on her lap, dressed out in all the magnificence which Spanish piety loves to lavish on the special object of its veneration. On Easter Monday, it was carried to the Cathedral in grand procession. The scene was exceedingly gay and animated. The ladies all wore white mantillas ; crowds of peasantry thronged the Carrera in their *majo* dresses ; and gipsy girls from the caves sported their tawdry finery and endless flounces. The procession was a long time forming ; but when at length the image emerged from the Church, it was greeted with loud cheering and ringing of bells. It was borne along by members of the first families in Granada, and followed by a long train of people carrying lighted torches in their hands ; but there seemed a very scanty attendance of either the clergy or the military. At night, the effect was very

beautiful indeed, as it returned, surrounded with such an immense number of lights. "Maria Zantisima e la Zangustias," as the Granadinos call the Virgin, is the one name invoked, upon every occasion, by all the lower orders: on her they call for assistance in every emergency; in her name the beggar supplicates for charity; and even still she is supposed to vouchsafe at times a miraculous compliance with their prayers. One or two persons who were nearly drowned last year, during an overflowing of the Darro, ascribed their escape to her assistance; for having called upon her in their last extremity, they were instantly landed in safety on the bank. The image is reported to have arrived here in some supernatural manner from Toledo, and has been an object of veneration ever since the days of Philip II.

The walk between the trees in front of the Church is the promenade chiefly resorted to by the upper classes, particularly in summer, when they appear only after dark; and the beautiful Alameda of the Genil is considered damp and unwholesome after sunset. The latter was formerly the bed of the stream, which meandered at will over a wide sandy course, until, during the occupation of the French, the river was walled into a proper channel, the banks on each side were elevated, and the present delicious walks laid out and planted. For this splendid promenade Granada is indebted to Sebastiani, and also for the handsome bridge which he built at the upper end of it. Gradual improvements since then by the Ayuntamiento have rendered it what it now is, one of the loveliest Alamedas in Spain. Avenues of lofty elms unite their branches above, like a gothic roof, in a foliage so dense, that even at mid-day they afford the most refreshing shade; gardens on each side, all through the early summer,

present one sheet of roses; while later in the year, pink and white oleanders continue the charm of the scene. Several fountains give additional coolness to the air, but they are more remarkable for their size and the abundance of water they pour forth, than for taste or elegance of design.

Beyond the bridge, a short distance up the valley of the Genil, are the ruins of a small hermitage, from which can be seen one of the most beautiful views in the neighbourhood of Granada, and from which the city assumes an entirely new aspect. This is peculiarly the view for sunset: it would be impossible to do justice on canvas to the rich colouring of the landscape; even the very soil around is of a crimson so intense, that any approach to it in painting would appear an exaggeration. The valley of the Genil is even still more fertile than that of the Darro; and being much more open it offers a larger space for cultivation. It is studded with villages and carmenes, almost hidden in the verdure which surrounds them; and the river, which rises in the loftiest range of the Sierra, and is fed from the melting snows, supplies a never failing source of fertility.

A little above the Alameda, and within the town, is a singular relic of one of the many royal residences which adorned Granada in the days of the Moors. It is now called the *Cuarto Real*, and belongs to a branch of the house of Pulgar. It is nearly surrounded by a large *huerta*, or orchard, and formed part of the possessions given by the Catholic sovereigns to Torquemada, for the adjoining convent of San Domingo which he founded. A bower of the most splendid laurel trees leads to the house. Planted on each side of a broad walk, they intertwine their branches at a great height overhead, and form a green vault, whose

thick foliage effectually shuts out the sunbeams, and offers a deliciously cool promenade even in the hottest days of summer. At the end of this bower is a gallery supported by arches and columns in the style of the Alhambra, with a large fountain in the centre. From this a magnificent horse-shoe arch opens into a lofty square room, with alcoves at the sides, and in front one of the graceful Moorish windows whose arches are supported by a centre column. The walls are richly decorated with Arabic inscriptions, and the usual lace-like ornaments in stucco; but here again sad havoc has been committed with whitewash, which has filled up the crevices, and quite deprived the edges of their delicate finish. Subterranean apartments have lately been discovered under the large hall; and it is supposed that a secret passage communicates from them to the Alhambra. The family who reside there have occasionally evening receptions; and nothing can be imagined more fairy-like than the appearance, at night, of this exquisite portico and hall, when brilliantly lighted up, and seen thus from the further end of the beautiful laurel walk, across the sparkling water of the fountains.

One of the first pilgrimages made by the generality of travellers in Granada, is to the Royal Chapel, where are deposited the bodies of Ferdinand and Isabella. Those sovereigns, whose whole energies were devoted to the acquisition of this important city, found their last resting-place within its walls; but the chapel erected to receive their remains is, in point of architectural beauty, quite unworthy of being their sepulchre. A splendid reja, one of those magnificent iron screens so distinctively an ornament of Spanish churches, protects the royal monument from the approach of the people, except during the celebration of service. A bier

of the purest Carrara marble, richly sculptured, its sides covered with religious designs and heraldic blazon, supports the effigies of Ferdinand and Isabella, reclining as in sleep. The figures are the size of life, and admirably executed. Beside them, but much loftier and more imposing, is erected the tomb of their daughter Juana, and her husband Philip the Fair. This unseemly occupation of the principal place, upon a site that should be sacred to the conquerors of Granada, considerably mars the general effect ; and, however much we may allow for filial affection, we can never excuse the bad taste of Charles V., who erected both the monuments, thus seeking to raise the memory of his imbecile parents above that of their illustrious predecessors. Who the artists were, who executed them, is not known with certainty. By some they are ascribed to Felipe de Vigarny ; by others to Italian artists. Beneath, is a vault containing the coffins of the four sovereigns and the little prince Miguel. It is small, and devoid of the slightest ornament ; and on square slabs in the centre and at the sides are laid the coffins, plain, ironbound, and blackened with age.

The most curious object in the Royal Chapel is the lofty retablo, containing bas-reliefs representing some of the scenes of the Conquest, and supposed to have been done by contemporary artists. These retablos are a kind of architectural elevation in wood, richly covered, which rise behind the altars, and ornamented with paintings in panel, or more commonly with painted wooden sculpture—a branch of art peculiar to the Peninsula. The bas-reliefs alluded to give rough representations of the delivery of the keys to Ferdinand and Isabella, and of the Baptism of the Moors, the women in the latter appearing in the same costume as worn by the women of Tetuan in the present day.

These carvings have likewise been attributed to Vigarny, or, as he is more generally called, Felipe de Borgoña, but they hardly appear worthy of his chisel. Vigarny died at Toledo in 1543, having, in conjunction with Berruguete, executed the sculpture in the choir of that cathedral. In the sacristy are preserved some interesting relics of the Catholic sovereigns ; the sword of Ferdinand ; a royal banner of embroidered silk ; a crown and sceptre of Isabella, silver gilt ; a highly finished picture in enamel, said to have been used by the queen as a portable altar-piece ; together with her own missal richly illuminated, and which she herself contributed to adorn. A handsome gothic doorway, which has escaped the whitewash which so unsparingly covers both the Chapel Royal and the Cathedral, leads into the latter edifice.

This building was commenced in 1529, under the direction of Diego de Siloe. The exterior is heavy, in the Græco-Romano style, and devoid of all architectural beauty. Like most other cathedrals it is still unfinished, the second tower having never been completed. Built upon the site of the ancient mosque, it bears over the principal entrance the appropriate inscription of "Ave Maria," words which in Granada are fraught with a peculiar interest, for they commemorate the bold exploit of Fernan del Pulgar, referred to in a previous chapter. Its form is an oblong square, save at the eastern end, which is circular. As usual, it is disfigured by a choir in the centre, upon each side of which is an organ painted in white and gold. The roof is supported by massive Corinthian columns ; and the pavement is laid in very handsome grey and white marble. The columns follow the outline of the church, and sweep in a semicircle round the high altar, which stands under a lofty dome. All around

the altar is one mass of gilding, adorned with several fine paintings by Alonso Cano, who contributed greatly to the embellishment of this cathedral, of which he was one of the minor canons. Cano was both a sculptor and a painter, and was one of the last of the great artists of Spain who distinguished themselves in both these branches. After having passed through several adventures and mishaps, and amongst others been accused of the murder of his wife, and put to the torture, his right hand on account of his profession being exempted from the infliction—he was at length appointed one of the canons of this cathedral, and took possession of his stall in 1652. He executed many paintings and other works to adorn the cathedral; and a beautiful little image of the Virgin, which he carved and painted, stands on the lectern in the choir. This style of carving in wood, and painting the figures so as to complete the illusion to the eye, is an art which was carried to great perfection in Spain, and had among its followers some of the greatest of her artists. In no country has the veneration for images been carried to such an excess as in the Peninsula. It would seem to have been so, from the earliest times; for the Council of Illiberis, held in the beginning of the fourth century within two leagues of Granada, condemned and strictly prohibited the excessive use of images in the churches. Every province, nay almost every city, has its miraculous shrine; and images of Our Lady and of the saints have been multiplied to satisfy the enthusiasm of devotees. The more they resembled life in minute detail, the more they satisfied the desires of a crowd of ignorant worshippers, who, without any soul for the loftier conceptions of art, only sought a life-like and startling reality. To gratify this taste, figure after figure was fashioned, and all the dresses and

accessories painted with the greatest care and minutiæ; and in many instances the artist executed nothing but the head and arms, the figure itself being clothed in sumptuous dresses and adorned with jewels, with which the generosity of pious devotees loved to deck the image of their favourite saint. But such representations, far from elevating the thoughts, or aiding the soul in religious contemplation, only tended to vulgarise the worship they were meant to assist; and the painted dolls which now disfigure the Spanish churches, and the low grade of religious faith which they indicate, clearly show how dangerous it is to familiarise too much to the mind objects which should ever be treated with a mysterious awe. That sculpture, in its truest sense, may be an art available for the furtherance of religion, I do not question. A marble figure of the Saviour on the Cross may bring more vividly to the imagination of the Christian the sufferings of his Redeemer, if the eye be not pained by too close a resemblance to familiar objects; but when the same event is represented coloured with all the painful realities of life, or rather of death, the ghastly colour of dying agony—the blood streaming from the wounds—it creates in the mind nothing but feelings of horror. There is no doubt, but that the master minds of Montañes and Torrigiano have given an ideal beauty to the creations of their chisel; but it is dangerous ground, and treads too closely upon the common-place. The generality have no more art or poetry about them than wax-work figures badly executed, and whose defects are exaggerated by the most tawdry and grotesque costume. Cano's own dying words are no inapt illustration of these remarks. His love of art was strong to the last; and when the priest, who watched his final moments, extended to

him a coarsely carved crucifix to kiss, he repelled it from him with disgust, exclaiming—"Provoke me not with that wretched thing; let me have a simple cross, for with that I can reverence Christ in faith—I can worship him as he is in himself, and as I contemplate him in my own mind."

Seven large pictures by Cano adorn the semicircular portion round the high altar; but they are too distant to be seen well. Except these and two or three others, there are no remarkable paintings in the cathedral. Some of the altars are adorned with marble pictures, in which clouds and landscape are sculptured—most extraordinary performances certainly, but producing a very heavy and unpleasing effect. A large statue of St. James, the patron Saint of Spain, by Pedro de Mena, a pupil of Alonso Cano, occupies the retablo of his chapel; and here also is preserved a copy of a Virgin and Child, said to have been painted by St. Luke, which was given, with the golden rose, to Isabella by Innocent VIII.

Adjoining the cathedral is the *Sagrario* or parish church; from which a side passage leads into the Royal Chapel. In this passage is the chapel given to Pulgar by the Catholic Sovereigns as his burial-place. It stands on the site of the door of the great Mosque, where he affixed the Ave Maria. A marble slab on the floor in front of the altar marks his tomb, and bears an inscription commemorative of his taking possession of the building while the city was yet in the hands of the Moors. An old picture forms the altar-piece, in the centre a Holy Family, and on one side a warrior holding a lighted torch. On the altar itself is a shield in mosaic, with the motto "Ave Maria." The state in which this chapel is at present speaks badly for the respect which the family entertain for

the memory of their ancestor. Neglected and uncared for, it is now used as a lumber-room for the Sagrario, and is so filled up with old tables, lanterns, and all sorts of rubbish, that it is hardly possible to get into it. It is indeed disgraceful, to see it turned to such "vile uses," and reflects little credit on the good taste of his descendants.

Near the cathedral, after passing the archbishop's palace, a large though somewhat dilapidated residence, is the Alcaiceria or silk bazaar. The former bazaar was a very curious relic of the Moorish times, but in 1843 it was entirely destroyed by fire. One has been since rebuilt, and presents a very fair imitation of Arabian architecture: but the daily declining trade of Granada has left most of the shops untenanted. The Alcaiceria opens into the Zacatin, an old Moorish street where the principal shops are situated. It is very narrow and picturesque, but is rapidly losing its eastern character; glass fronts being substituted for the open window, where in the olden style the goods were laid out for sale. The Zacatin leads from the Plaza Nueva to the Bibarambla, so famed in Moorish story as the scene of all the tournaments and feats of prowess on which the ladies looked down from latticed balconies around. It is now called the Plaza de la Constitucion, a name by which of late years the principal squares in the Spanish towns have been designated—doubtless to commemorate, in Spanish fashion, a victory that yet remains to be achieved. This square has lost nearly all trace of antiquity, the old houses on the north side having been all pulled down, and a row of prim, modern-looking buildings substituted in their place. An old house belonging to the Ayuntamiento, built in the reign of Philip II., has some quaint-looking *miradores;* and at one corner of

the square is a Moorish gateway, better known to the people as the Puerta de las Orejas (of the ears). It derives its name from an atrocity committed during a disturbance which occurred on the proclamation of Philip IV., when at a grand fête some scaffolding having given way, many persons were killed, and among them several women. In the confusion which ensued, some of the mob began stealing the ornaments from the bodies of the dead; and, at length, proceeded so far, for the greater expedition, as to tear the earrings from their ears. It has likewise been called de los Cuchillos, from the police hanging over it the forbidden knives taken from the people—a suitable name enough, considering that a neighbouring gateway is called de las Cucharas (of the spoons). The Bibarambla is still the scene of all public ceremonies, and appears decked out in peculiar style on the feast of Corpus Christi, when it becomes the fashionable promenade. On this day the raised platform, which then fills up the centre, is ornamented with a temple of some unknown order, and flowers and fountains, which are all exhibited on this occasion only. Round the Plaza a covered colonnade is erected of painted canvas, which serves to protect the procession from the heat of the sun, and is adorned with paintings and rhymes of the most grotesque description. How painfully at variance these latter are with the sanctity of the ceremony, which they are placed there to honour, no one who has not seen them can imagine. Caricatures of the broadest description, doggrel verses on the common topics of the day, coarse lampoons, odes and rhymes to the Holy Sacrament, all in most unseemly juxta-position, cover the pillars, and convey to the stranger a melancholy, but alas! too true, an impression of the state of religion of the country. It is an animated scene.

Crowds of peasantry flock into the town from the neighbourhood around; all appear in their gayest dress; the balconies are bright with snowy mantillas and sparkling fans; music and the report of fireworks fill the air, when at noon on Corpus Eve the festivities commence in the square by the civil authorities delivering it up to the clergy. From this hour to the following morning the square is crowded—all through the day and night the people parade round and round. In the evening it is brilliantly lighted, and bands of music keep incessantly playing; the sides of the Plaza are lined with chairs and couches where the ladies come down, in full dress, and see and are seen to equal advantage. The immense concourse of people, however, makes it rather disagreeable, although a Spanish crowd is the most amiable and accommodating on the face of the earth—the Puerta de las Orejas notwithstanding. The Pescaderia or Fish-market, leading out of the Plaza, picturesque at all times, from the long projecting wooden gallery which runs its entire length, is on this eve an immense "curiosity shop" of the most singular description. The stalls are no longer covered with the finny tribe, but with toys, trinkets, pictures, &c.; and each stall is fitted up as a shrine, brilliantly lighted, with its altar and crucifix and pious pictures, where the people may pray or purchase as they feel inclined.

The procession on the following day offers little attraction to those who have had the good fortune to witness this ceremony in any of the great cities of Italy or Germany. The present poverty of the church and clergy here, preventing any great display on their part; the absence of the monastic orders, and there being no court or great authorities to make necessary a large attendance of the military; render it comparatively a

very quiet affair. The only peculiar feature it presented were a number of little children, who preceded the Custodia in which the Host was carried, dressed as angels with gold and silver wings, and altogether "got up" in the most fantastic manner ; the poor little things being hardly able to walk under the weight of their finery. The procession looks very well from the balconies of the Zacatin, which is covered with an awning for the occasion ; and the crowds of gaily dressed people, and the bright hangings from the windows, give it that air and charm of joyous festivity which can alone be found in Italy and Spain, where all seem so thoroughly bent on enjoying themselves on fête days.

After the procession is concluded, the people prepare to adjourn to the bull-ring—a strange mode of celebrating a religious feast ; but then, it is in Spain, and one here soon ceases to be surprised at incongruities. The Plaza de Toros is small, and cannot boast of very good corridas. The sports are opened by a peculiar ceremony, that of inaugurating the games by prayer ! When the *cuadrilla* enters, they proceed as usual to offer their respects to the presiding authorities, and then turning round, they march across the Plaza to a shrine at the other side, before which they all uncover themselves, and kneeling down, begin to pray. This is the only Plaza in Spain, I believe, where such an extraordinary exhibition occurs in the arena. The bull-fight is followed by a crowded performance at the theatre ; and the day winds up with fireworks on the Carrera.

The churches in Granada offer but little to arrest the attention of the traveller ; one of the most interesting is that of San Geronimo, from its being the burial-place of the great Captain, Gonzalo de

Cordoba. The magnificent convent to which it was formerly attached, has been converted into cavalry barracks, and the church itself is almost deserted: the tomb of Gonzalo is in front of the high altar, and a simple slab of white marble let into the pavement, with a latin inscription, marks the site. This church was shamefully treated by the French, who destroyed the tower in order to turn its materials to account for the bridge of Sebastiani in the salon or Alameda, the remains of Gonzalo were torn from their resting-place, and his sword which formerly hung over the retablo disappeared. But the final work of destruction was reserved for a Spanish mob, who, when the popular fury was directed against the convents, broke into the building in 1836, destroyed everything in the church, again violating the sepulchre of one of their greatest heroes, and scattering his ashes to the winds. That the hands of the foreigner should commit such atrocities, and thus avenge centuries afterwards the defeats that their countrymen had sustained at the hands of the great Captain, seems hardly credible; but that Spaniards themselves should have followed such an example, and insulted the ashes of the man who had shed such lustre upon their name, is one of those sad facts which show how difficult it is to arrest the career of a revolutionary mob. The church and convent of San Geronimo were commenced by the Catholic sovereigns, and afterwards completed by Gonzalo's widow, who begged to be allowed to have the church as a burial-place for her family, which was conceded to her by Charles V.

Not far from the San Geronimo is the convent hospital of the San Juan de Dios, a princely edifice, which owes its foundation to one whose life was a constant sacrifice to the cause of humanity. A poor

soldier repenting of the sins of his past life devoted himself to relieving the wants of the suffering poor around him, and gave them an asylum in his house; while he sought support and assistance from his wealthier brethren in the holy work in which he was engaged. A small shrine near the Puerta Elvira, according to tradition, marks the spot where he used to sell devotional books to increase his scanty funds. He contrived to enlist the sympathies of a few others like himself, who consecrated their lives to the object he had in view, and he now commenced carrying out the design he had long formed of founding a hospital. Large funds now came in to second his intentions, but death carried him off in 1550, and it was reserved for his successor, Ortega, to complete the sumptuous building which now immortalises his name. He was canonised as San Juan de Dios. The order which he founded, and which was placed under the rule of the Augustines, rapidly increased, and at the time of the abolition of the monastic orders in 1836, they numbered above sixty hospitals in Castile and Andalucia, besides many others which they had founded in the vast colonies that belonged to Spain.

In the general destruction of religious property, the monks of the order of San Juan de Dios were of course involved; but the possessions of this the first hospital founded in Spain were left untouched, and it is still devoted to the purpose to which it was dedicated, under the superintendence of the Sisters of Charity. The cloister or patio is magnificent, adorned with frescoes representing events in the life of the saint, with descriptions in verse; the lower portion of the walls covered with azulejos, with the simple inscription constantly recurring, "He who erected this implores you to commend him to God." *El que costeó esta obra pide le*

encomienden à Dios. The church is profusely decorated with marbles and gilding, displaying a lavish expenditure, without much taste. The words inscribed over the principal entrance are those, with which its illustrious founder begged alms of the passers by; "Do good unto yourselves." The remains of San Juan de Dios repose in a massive urn behind the high altar.

A short distance outside the town, is all that remains of the once splendid convent of the Carthusian friars. Austere in their rules, the Carthusian monasteries, nevertheless, displayed a wealth and magnificence which left them almost unrivalled; and the ruins of those which existed in Spain are among the finest of the ecclesiastical monuments. Seventeen or eighteen were founded in different parts of the country, the first in Catalonia in 1163. The Cartuja of Granada has now nearly disappeared; its magnificent cloisters have been pulled down, its large orchards parcelled out, and sold to different individuals, and some portion of the original building is arranged as a villa and inhabited by a private family. The church with the small adjoining cloister was about to share the same fate, but it has been fortunately spared, and converted into a sort of parish church, which secures its preservation. A flight of steps leads to a platform in front, which commands a charming view over the vega. A statue of San Bruno adorns the façade. A small cloister attached to it still remains, covered with paintings by one of the lay brethren, named Sanchez Cotan; they represent the tortures to which the Carthusians were exposed in England by our Henry VIII. In the refectory is a large cross, painted by the same, and so admirably done, that even the birds try to alight upon it, fancying it to be made of wood—a delusion which the Spaniards consider the triumph of

art. The church itself is very much overladen with ornament; the sacristy is very handsome, and ornamented with the richest marbles; the doors and presses intended for the priests' vestments are all most exquisitely worked in tortoiseshell, ivory and mother-of-pearl, inlaid in ebony, and lined with cedar: it contains but little in the way of pictures. A small Conception on copper, attributed to Murillo, and a companion to it, said to be by Cano, are in the sacristy. The church is now most carefully kept, and mass said there every Sunday for the benefit of the rural population in the neighbourhood.

Many are the curious old houses in the Albaycin, which still bear traces of their Moorish origin. The palaces of the Moorish chieftains are now the wretched habitations of the poorest inhabitants of Granada, and squalling ragged children people the patios, which once glittered with armed warriors; the population is gradually diminishing, and within the last few years many of the houses in this quarter have been pulled down, their owners finding the ground more profitable when converted into gardens. Beyond the Alcazaba, runs the exterior line of walls skirting the city and cresting the hill up to the hermitage of San Miguel el Alto, where they turn and dip down into the valley of the Darro. These walls were built with a portion of the ransom of the warlike Bishop of Jaen, who was taken prisoner in a foray in the reign of Ismail, the father of Muley Hacen; the bishop paid heavy sums, but died in captivity, before the full amount of his ransom was forthcoming.

The view from the platform of San Miguel is very extensive, and from its being so elevated, you look down on the Alhambra, and obtain a very good idea of the line of walls which surrounded the city.

The whole of this hill, sloping down to the valley of the Darro, is covered with the prickly pear ; and peering among their thick clumsy leaves may be seen the entrances to caves, hollowed out of the mountain side, and chiefly inhabited by gipsies. The hill swarms with living beings, who crawl out of the most extraordinary holes when you least expect them, as their habitations are most effectually concealed by the thick masses of the cactus and the aloe. These habitations have the double advantage of being cool in summer and warm in winter, and if one may judge from the crowds of children who swarm around, there is not much danger of their population diminishing.

The ride through the valley of the Darro is very pretty. About a league up the river are the large buildings formerly inhabited by the disciples of Loyola, who showed no less judgment than good taste in selecting so secluded a situation, far from the noise and distraction of the city. At times the bed of the stream is enlivened by the presence of a few miserable looking gold-diggers, whose rewards are by no means commensurate with their perseverance. The dark brown sand when washed, produces a few sparkling grains, sufficient to prove the claims of the river to be called the Golden Darro, and to repay the labours of the poor by a few reals' worth in the course of the day. The mania for gold has latterly extended itself to this out-of-the-way place, and several people have been speculating, and companies formed, but all with small success ; the produce not being sufficient to repay the cost of the machinery, &c. Formerly it seems to have been more abundant, and Charles V. upon his arrival at Granada was presented with a crown made of the gold of the Darro. The bed of the river has worn itself a channel through a

romantic glen spanned by one or two picturesque bridges; its rocky sides in some places approaching close to each other covered with the most luxurious ivy. On St. Peter's day all the world flock here to enjoy themselves, and throng the bed of the river, walking about laughing and talking, apparently all the amusement the Spaniards care for. On their fêtes they do not indulge in games of any sort; a song to the guitar, or a dance, is the only variety that breaks the routine of their simple amusements.

There are some few fête days in which the people throng to particular places; St. Peter's is one of them. On St. John's Eve all the world assemble on the Alameda of the Xenil, about ten or twelve at night, and walk up and down until two or three in the morning. The lower orders all sally forth on this occasion, and as the clock strikes twelve the young girls consider it necessary to wash their faces in some neighbouring fountain, in order to secure themselves a husband during the ensuing year. Woe be to those who have no friendly stream near in which to perform their ablutions while the fatal hour is striking. A bath at the same hour is likewise considered to bring good fortune to the children, but the rising generation are not satisfied with anything short of entire immersion; the large circular basin of the fountain at the head of the Alameda presents a curious scene, as they plunge in, one after the other, and swimming about, or climbing up the fountain, turn the water in showers on the bystanders.

The lower orders here are much more addicted to drinking than the inhabitants of other portions of Andalucia; but beyond the usual cases of stabbing, there does not seem to be much crime among the people. These offences are frightfully numerous,

the *navaja* or long knife being drawn on the slightest provocation and most effectually deciding every quarrel. Jealousy and revenge often lead to these homicides, but they as often are the termination of some dispute on the respective merits of *toreros*, or any other equally trivial subject, which may lead to a difference of opinion. Crimes of this description are generally punished with but two or three years confinement in one of the Presidios, where the men are employed in various works, some light enough, such as watering the roads, &c. In the Alhambra they appear to lead rather a pleasant life of it than otherwise ; the best behaved are employed as guards in the walks. One day, when we were going up, we missed a young man who was in charge of the centre walk, and who had been imprisoned for two or three years for having stabbed and dangerously wounded a cousin of his own upon some slight provocation. On asking where he was, we were told he had been killed the night before. It seems that on occasion of some fête day, his mother had asked of the governor permission for him to come down and spend it in the town, which request was granted on account of his uniform good conduct ; but in the evening, his cousin attacked and mortally wounded him, thus revenging the attempt which had formerly been made on his own life. Hardly a night passes in Granada without some case of stabbing, and on fête days an additional number swells the list. The punishment for offences, here, varies so much, according as interest or money can be brought to bear in behalf of the criminal, that it is hard to say how justice takes its course. Once in prison after arrest there are so many facilities of escape from punishment, that in the case of any determined criminals, such as banditti, &c., whom

the government are really anxious should be punished, the guards generally receive orders to shoot them before bringing them into the town, and when they arrive, the people are coolly informed they were shot because they attempted to escape.

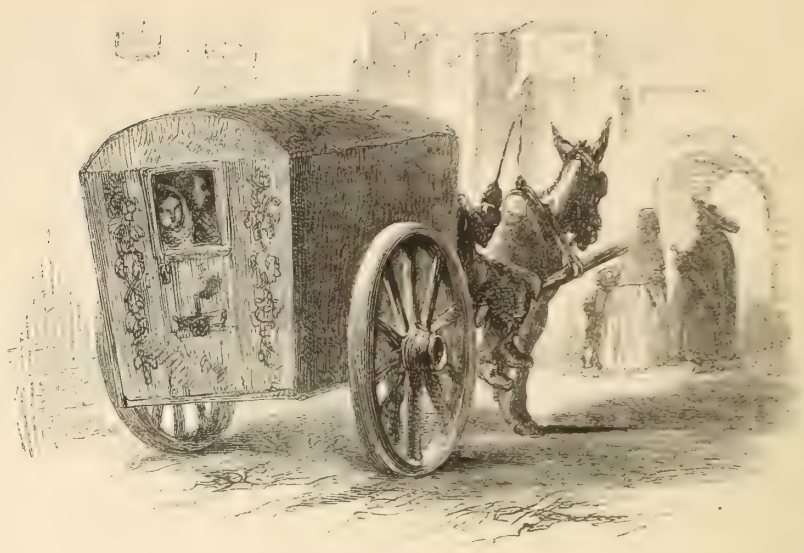
The soldiers who act here as police are a very fine body; they are all picked men, who really do their duty, rather an uncommon thing in Spain; and have proved a most efficient force. They were organised by Narvaez, and wear a uniform resembling the old French dress, with a cocked hat in Napoleon style.

At night the towns are guarded by watchmen, who rather disturb the sleep of those unaccustomed to them by the loud tone in which they announce the hour, "Ave Maria purissima, las once y sereno," the hour being always followed by a declaration of the state of the weather; and as it is more generally fine than otherwise, they are called Serenos, from that being, with few exceptions, the concluding word of their watch-cry. The Serenos and Guardia Civil are common to all Spanish towns; but one class of men more peculiar to Granada, we must not pass unnoticed, viz., the Aguadors, who abound in this water-loving town.

There are two or three springs from which these men take the water to sell it in the squares and streets; one is the Algibes, or reservoirs I have already noticed, in the Alhambra; and another favourite fountain is the Avellanos, in the valley of the Darro, a shady spot embowered in a perfect forest of hazel, whence it takes its name. Here, at all hours of the day, the Aguadors may be seen filling their jars; some carrying it about on their backs in tin vessels set in cork-bark, which is found to act as a refrigerator; others, possessing a four-footed beast to relieve them of their burdens, load

their donkeys with two jars on each side, which, covered with green leaves to keep the water fresh and cool, and buried under the foliage surmounting them, really appear like a walking forest. The Aguadors themselves are an independent off-hand set of people, some of them very amusing, and full of all sorts of anecdote.

Never was a nation so fond of water as the Spaniards, and the quantity they get through would have excited the unqualified admiration of Priessnitz himself. They have a variety of expressions to define its qualities, perfectly inexplicable to the stranger, who strives in vain to detect the differences which entitle water to such epithets as rich, and poor, fat and thin ; and change of water is here the regular phrase instead of change of air, and water, as a beverage, seems to be regarded with as much veneration by the Spaniards, as the Moors looked on it as a means of purification ; in the latter sense the inhabitants of Andalucia do not make much use of it. The scanty accommodation afforded for the use of water externally is rather striking to the traveller. In travelling by diligence he may notice two or three basins arranged in the dining-room, or passage leading to it, for the accommodation of those who arrive and wish to indulge in the extraordinary luxury of washing their hands ; but this is only where a higher degree of civilisation has been reached. In small inns in out-of-the-way towns, a barber's basin is sometimes all you can obtain for your ablutions ; and although water to drink may be procured here with greater facility and purity than in any other country, water to wash is a very difficult article to obtain.



A GALERA.

CHAPTER V.

Sierras que cubre el sempiterno hielo,
Donde Darro y Genil beben su vida;
Valles salubres, trasparente cielo
De la Alpujarra aun mal conocida.

ZORRILLA.

It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon, between,
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green.

SCOTT.

ENVIRONS OF GRANADA—LA ZUBIA—STA. FE—COLUMBUS—SOTO DE ROMA—HARVEST SCENES—ELVIRA—COUNCIL OF ILLIBERIS—VIZNAR—ALFACAR—BOTANISING—EXCURSION TO THE SIERRA—SUNRISE IN THE HILLS—DORNAJO SPRING—PICACHO DE VELETA—MOUNTAIN BIVOUAC—MONACHIL—THE ALPUJARRAS—LAST STRUGGLE OF THE MOORS—PADUL—SPANISH ROAD-MAKING—LANJARON—ORGIBA—THE MULA HACEN—POQUEIRA—RETURN—DEPARTURE FOR SEVILLE—LOJA—LONELY JOURNEY—THE GALERA—ALCALÁ DE GUADAIRA.

HOWEVER interesting the town of Granada may be, its neighbourhood offers many points fraught with souvenirs of the past; and the lovely summer evenings may be well employed in rides through the vega, while those who delight in collecting wild flowers, and studying the botany, or the geology of the country in

which they are residing, will find a rich harvest in its wild sierras.

About a league from the town at the foot of the Sierra Nevada, where numerous torrents flow down from its sides to water the vega with their melted snows, stands a small village called La Zubia, the white belfry of its church rising above the olive yards and orchards which surround it. La Zubia, for those who care not for the past, is nothing more than one of the many villages dotted about the vega, consisting of small whitewashed houses clustered round the church, intersected by water-courses, through which the torrents are led to fertilise the plain. In its streets may be seen the mouldering walls of some ancient mansion, once the residence of proud Castilian nobles, whose arms, carved in stone over the keystone of the Moorish arches, seem placed as the seal of conquest on the abode of the vanquished foe.

To those who love the story of the past this now neglected village recals a bright page in Granada's history. To the left, as you enter the town, is a large garden, once belonging to a Franciscan convent, now converted into a farmhouse, and the owner will lead you to a small open temple by the side of a gigantic bay tree, and tell you that here Isabella sat when she came to have a nearer view of Granada than could be obtained from the encampment of the Christian host. It was a charming evening when we first went there, the sun was setting in a flood of gold behind the mountains of Elvira and Parapanda. Before us rose Granada, on her amphitheatre of hills, crowned by the towers of her Palace Fortress; to our right, the Picacho still robed in its snowy mantle; far away behind, the height where Boabdil sighed forth his last farewell to the home of his ancestors: all before and

around, the vega enclosed by its framework of mountains, its fields at this season teeming with life, the men at work gathering in the harvest, and the yellow hue of the stubble contrasting with the verdant green of the tall hemp.

Here, on this same spot, the peerless Isabella, surrounded by the flower of her chivalrous host, gazed upon the city she so long had coveted, and which was soon to be the reward of her untiring energy and perseverance; the brightest jewel in the crown of the two Castiles: for the conquest of Granada, which united under one sovereign all the separate kingdoms of Spain, consolidated the Spanish monarchy. Yet this union, far from laying the foundation of the welfare of the kingdom, seems but to have preluded its fall; energies, which had been all concentrated on the extirpation of the Mahommedans, were allowed no time to be devoted to the improvement of the newly acquired territories. Distracted by the golden vision of the New World, paralysed by the blighting influence of the Inquisition, the internal state of Spain can hardly be said to have improved materially from that period.

The Vega of Granada is well cultivated now, but its inhabitants have only availed themselves of the admirable system of irrigation bequeathed them by the Moors; in many instances, they have neglected this instead of improving upon it; and much that was like a garden in their hands, has become an arid desert under their conquerors.

With a population totally disproportioned to the extent of land in the Peninsula, the inhabitants can easily obtain from the ground sufficient for their subsistence; satisfied with little, their wants are quickly supplied, and they have hardly any inducement to exert themselves. With governments, the members of which

only think of enriching themselves at the public expense, how can the state of things be expected to improve? They change, but of what avail is change where bad is only replaced by worse? Office in this country is a mere gratification of personal ambition; the advancement of a small coterie who seek their own individual profit, and, once installed in power, abandon the principles they used as a stepping-stone. There is no such thing as public spirit in Spain; their revolutions are not the expressions of popular feeling; they are only got up by particular parties out of spite for some insult they have received, or envy at their adversaries having too long enjoyed the sweets of office; but, alas! so corrupt does everything appear in the present day, that an honest man ceases to continue one so soon as he is dragged into the fatal vortex of the court. Could Isabella behold the present state of things under the reign of the second of her name; could she, who approached so nearly to perfection, both as a sovereign and a woman, behold the events now passing, she of whose ministers it may truly be said, as the greatest compliment, that they were worthy of their royal mistress; she who watched over the welfare of every portion of her subjects with such untiring solicitude; what would be her feelings to see the Spain of the present day? We may drop a veil over such a mournful contemplation, nor seek to draw comparisons between the reigns of the first and second Isabella.

The presence of the Catholic sovereigns so near the town provoked the Moorish knights to a slight skirmish, which ended in a serious conflict. To commemorate the events of the day a convent was erected on the spot where the queen viewed Granada: the building still stands, but its inhabitants were expelled in 1835; its present possessor still, however, preserves the laurel

planted, as they say, by her own hands. From La Zubia a ride across the vega leads to Santa Fé, the town that was built after the fire which consumed the Christian camp, to impress on the inhabitants of Granada how firm and unalterable were the resolves of their enemy. The canvas walls were speedily converted into ramparts of brick and stone, and here was signed the treaty of capitulation ; a treaty made to be violated by the Christians, who ought to have been the first to set an example of better faith.

Here, Columbus learned from Isabella that the crown of Castile would venture much for the carrying out his projects of discovery ; here, the realisation of his hopes broke upon the enthusiast, and his heart was brightened by finding one who could sympathise with his ideas, and not think them the dreams of a madman ; and here Torquemada suggested the expulsion of the Jews from the Spanish dominions, the decree ordaining which was finally signed and sealed within the walls of Granada. We can hardly imagine the gentle hand of the humane and merciful Isabel signing a decree which should plunge so many thousands into misery, and yet that same hand ordained, also, the establishment of the Inquisition. So far can fanaticism pervert the minds of even the purest to sanction the vilest cruelties, under the mistaken idea of furthering a religion which preached peace on earth, and goodwill towards men.

Santa Fé now bears no trace of having witnessed such important events in history ; a wretched village with four straight streets crossing, diverge from its Plaza, in the centre of which stands a church, whose two small towers form conspicuous objects in all the distant views of the vega. Between them is the head of a Moor, in stone, transfixed by a spear, commemorating the heroic combat of Garcilaso de la

Vega with the Moorish chieftain Tarfe. An hour's ride from Santa Fé, over the flat plain, brings you to Soto de Roma, the estate granted by the Spanish Government to Wellington, in reward of services which the nation seem most unwilling to acknowledge. The debt of gratitude is a heavy one to pay, and Spanish debts are not famed in general for being regularly liquidated. There is nothing to see at Soto de Roma beyond the usual style of Spanish villages, nor does the Duke's property appear much more thriving than that of his neighbours.

This is a pretty ride on a July evening, when the harvest is getting in ; for then all is life and animation in the vèga ; the corn has been cut, and the people are busily employed in the fields, treading it out on the circular threshing-floors, paved with stones for this purpose. Small sheds are run up, the coarse matting supported by poles forming a shelter from the burning rays of the sun, and a sleeping-place for those who remain to guard the corn at night. Near this shed are grouped the lively peasants, the women and children preparing the *gazpacho*, a favourite dish of cucumbers, bread, garlic, oil, vinegar and water, which cools and refreshes the parched labourers ; the young horses are driven round and round, to teach them the work for which they are destined ;—all form a picture of rural enjoyment and activity which is not often seen in this land of the *dolce far niente*. The operation itself is very striking ; the men standing on small planks of wood, with sharp iron teeth beneath, and driving their horses rapidly round over the sheaves of corn, which are laid on the circular "era," thus bruising out the grain, which is afterwards winnowed by being thrown up into the air. Sometimes a small car is substituted for the common plank, on which

two can sit, and this affords great amusement to the young people, driving round and round, while an occasional upset and a roll in the corn contribute to the merriment of the party. The scene is completed by the large heavy carts constantly arriving, bringing the corn drawn by the patient oxen, who never vary their pace, following their driver, who walks before them with a long stick across his shoulder, by which he guides them, every movement of which they follow; all this combines to present a charming picture of rural life, brightened by the gay dresses of the peasantry and the glow of a southern land. All look happy and joyous, and the guitars enliven the whole with their lively notes.

And then as night approaches, all nature seems rejoiced at the freshness of the evening air. Now is the time for enjoyment; these evenings are indeed delicious, more particularly if in riding home the moon comes forth in all her glory, shining in the dark firmament, and diffusing that sweet softened light which soothes the senses after the burning heat of day; the fine outline of the Sierra rises in front, the lights in the distant town glitter like stars, and all around, the vega appears on fire; the stubble is blazing on the fields whence the corn has been removed, thick wreaths of smoke curl upwards, now bursting into flame, now smouldering on the plain; and although this denotes that man is actively engaged in preparing his fields to yield a second crop, all nature seems at peace after the heat and brightness of the day.

After the corn ripens and the hemp is cut, the vega begins to assume a burnt and calcined look, a penalty from which even these well irrigated plains are not exempt, exposed as they are to an almost tropical sun. In September the Indian corn ripens, but the verdant

patches of this graceful crop barely suffice to tinge it once more with green. The effect of this beautiful plant is very much injured by the custom of cutting off the upper leaves, to give food to their horses before even the grain ripens.

Returning from Soto de Roma, the road sweeps round the base of the volcanic peaks of the Sierra Elvira, that rises like an advanced guard in the plain, detached and isolated from the adjacent mountains. Its arid slopes contrast with the smiling vega around, and yet here, on its southern side, stood the great Roman city of Illiberis. It gradually declined before the superior advantages offered by the rising town of Granada, and now it has entirely disappeared, and not a trace remains even to mark its site.

On a rising ground, behind that which the city is supposed to have occupied, a large cemetery was discovered some few years ago ; upwards of two hundred sepulchres were opened, and some vestiges of the foundations of ancient buildings were traced ; most of the sepulchres contained skeletons. Signet rings, rich bracelets of gold and silver, amphoræ and other relics of antiquity were likewise discovered ; these however have all vanished, the jewellers' shops having been found by the peasants of the neighbouring villages the most lucrative way of disposing of their treasures, and they in turn have melted them down, regardless of anything but their intrinsic value, for the manufacture of modern ornaments. The sepulchres having been rifled of their contents, and afforded a profitable occupation during a year of drought, the earth has again covered them, and the passer-by would hardly notice anything remarkable in the small hollows which are dotted over this desolate piece of ground, with no habitations in the neighbourhood, save the wretched

village of Atarfe, at some little distance on the edge of the vega.

In Illiberis was held the first council of the Christian Church in Spain. It is supposed to have taken place early in the fourth century, Osio, Bishop of Córdoba, having assisted at it, the same who presided in 325 at the celebrated Council of Nice. Nineteen Spanish bishops were present; many of its decrees were very rigorous, and some might be enforced in these days among the present inhabitants of the Peninsula with great advantage. The custom of lighting candles in the cemeteries on certain anniversaries, and that of prostrating themselves before images and paintings, were strictly forbidden in its canons; the latter more especially, as tending to the revival of Pagan superstitions. 'The early Fathers of the Church saw this, and wisely forbade the introduction or the continuance of a custom which, in the minds of the uneducated, might degenerate, and beyond question has degenerated in this country, into gross abuses.

One of the prettiest rides in the neighbourhood of Granada is to Viznar, a village on the side of the mountains to the north of the town. Here, towards the end of the last century, one of the Archbishops of Granada built a country palace in a pretty situation; Granada itself however being concealed from it by a projecting hill. The rooms are large and spacious, and the façade towards the garden is painted with the rudest frescoes from the life of Don Quixote. It now belongs to a private individual. The road above Viznar winds along the sides of the Sierra de Alfacar to the Fuente Grande, as the spring is called which rises on the mountain-side; and a more lovely spring than this it would be difficult to find. The water bubbles up from a gravelly bed as cool and pure as

even the most water-loving Spaniard could desire, and flows down in the channels cut for it to spread fertility around, irrigating the thirsty land on its way to the town of Granada, which is supplied in a great measure by this crystal stream.

It is a sweet spot, this Fuente Grande ; above rise the jagged peaks of the Sierra, bare and bleak, although many a rare flower nestles among its wilderness of rocks. Below the spring the scene is changed ; all is green and verdant ; the olives cover the declivities, and all is clothed with the most luxuriant vegetation ; for water here is the magician which converts, by a stroke of his wand, a desert into a paradise.

Those who care for flowers are advised not to stop at the fountain, but to climb the arid-looking cliffs, and their labour will not pass unrewarded. In the interstices of the rocks, the most exquisite little flowers live and die unnoticed, while the more gaudy peony raises its bright showy blossoms, whose crimson colour forms a beautiful contrast to the grey stones among which it flourishes.

Such are some of the many excursions which may be made by those who have sufficient time to while away at Granada, in which all may find some employment or another wherewith to pass away the sweet days of spring in the enjoyment of the beauties which nature has lavished on this delicious land, and where history has rendered each spot of ground sacred to the mind of the traveller.

As summer advances, an excursion may be made to the Sierra. The Picacho de Veleta is not the loftiest summit of the chain, but as it is easiest of access from Granada, it is the one most frequently visited, the ascent of the Mula Hacen involving a tour through the Alpujarras, a wild and beautiful mountainous district

lying on the southern side of the Sierra. Those who ascend the Picacho must make up their minds to spend a night in the open air, at an elevation of some 8000 feet, where even in July and August the cold is disagreeable enough. We were prepared for all adventures, and accordingly, one morning, we sallied forth, accompanied by our guides. We left Granada about 2 o'clock in the morning ; it was quite dark as we passed through the town, and climbed the ascent beyond it. When day dawned, we had already attained a considerable elevation ; the vega lay like a map behind us. And now the sun rose, and words cannot describe the beauty of the scene presented to us as it spread its glowing hues over every object ; first tinging the distant mountains, then stealing over the vega, driving before it the cold morning shadows, infusing light and life as it advanced, until at length it penetrated into every nook and corner, and illumined the red towers of the Moorish palace.

Behind us the verdant plain ; in front the lofty summits ; and around far as the eye could reach on the opposite banks of the Xenil, a perfect sea of mountains, their rounded summits rising one above another like the waves of a tempest-tossed ocean, intersected by various channels worn by torrents as they sweep into the valleys below. A few cortijos, or farmhouses, dotted about here and there, relieved the look of loneliness which the barren appearance of the mountains gave, and a three hours' ride up a precipitous path, against bare chalky rocks, brought us into the Puche. This is a sort of caldron, surrounded by barren heights, and covered with corn-fields ; signs of the industry of man in these elevated regions. Behind us lay the gorge, through which the Monachil rushes on to fertilise the vega ; before us rose the rough peaks of the Dornajo,

whose limestone crags give shelter to many a rare and beautiful flower; below us a deep valley gradually descending to the bed of the Monachil, where stands a small cortijo. Beyond this valley rises an amphitheatre of stupendous hills, with the pyramidal-shaped crest of the Trevenque peering over them, and loftier still, the dark summit of the Veleta itself; the white snow-fields still sparkling on its grey schistose rocks.

From the Puche you gradually ascend towards the Dornajo, and the character of the vegetation becomes more Alpine. On the way, a small and scanty spring tempts the traveller to rest and seek refreshment; for small as it is, there is no other to be met with before reaching the summit; and here you must supply yourself with sufficient water for the night, or be content to drink of the melting snows from the nearest drift. Here the calcareous rocks are covered with the stiff prickly tufts of such Alpine plants as the Erinacea Hispanica, Astragalus creticus, &c., the deep purple blossoms of the former covering the ground. Here we stopped to breakfast. Our guide was quite an original; not one of those accustomed to go about and lionise travellers, but a genuine specimen of a rough mountaineer; tall and strongly made, it was quite impossible to tire him at walking. Francisco had been always employed by a Granada botanist to accompany him in his excursions, and he had picked up a sufficient knowledge of flowers to recognise most of them by their Latin names, and could lead you at once to the spot where any of the rarer kinds were to be found. He used to come and pay us visits very often, and bring some of the spoils of his wanderings, marching into the drawing-room with his cigar in his mouth, and seating himself down in the most unceremonious manner. A genuine specimen of an Andalucian

peasant, always at home, but at the same time never permitting his easy familiarity to lead him beyond the bounds of proper respect.

Our repast over, we proceeded on our way, climbing the sides of the Dornajo, the silvery leaves of a dwarf convolvulus forming quite a carpet on the stones. Here the aspect of the Sierra changes ; we leave the limestone rocks and enter upon the dark slaty formation which forms the culminating portion of the chain. The path now leads along the shoulder of the mountain and passes under the craggy rocks of the San Francisco, until at length we arrive at the Choza or hut, which serves as a refuge to travellers for the night. A small shed of smaller stones has been raised against a huge rock, into which two people can just creep and lie down, while two or three large stones form a wall to protect the rest of the party from the violence of the winds.

This place of refuge has been arranged by the *neveros,* the men who go up every night from Granada to fetch the snow required for the consumption of the town, and here they rest sometimes on their journey.

Wearisome indeed must be this constant ascending and descending, for they never meet a human being on their way from Granada to the summit, save now and then one or two wretched peasants who wander for hours over the bare slopes of the Sierra to collect a few handfuls of the Manzanilla Real (*Artemisia granatensis*). This small plant is highly valued for its medicinal qualities, and a few reals reward them for their long and toilsome walk. The day was beautiful, and we preferred ascending at once to see the sun set from the summit instead of waiting till the following morning to see it rise ; so, leaving all our preparations for the night at the Choza, we continued

on our way. The path ceases to be so good after leaving this halting-place and descends into a hollow where several little ponds are dignified with the title of Lagunillas ; the clear water oozes forth and actually clothes the damp ground around it with a mass of verdure, the grass sparkling with small white and yellow ranunculuses.

The road now climbs the face of a slaty precipice, crossing fields of snow, along whose edge the little violet spreads out its blossoms, peeping from between the stones, reminding one of home and spring-time. Here the road reaches the edge of a tremendous precipice, and you look down into a deep crater called the Corral de Veleta, surrounded by the precipitous cliffs of the most elevated summits of the mountain chain. In front rises the Picacho, forming an almost perpendicular wall of rock, extending on to the Mula Hacen and the peaks of the Alcazaba ; the base fringed with the wavy ice of the glacier, whose melting waters feed the Xenil, which takes its rise in this ravine. Here we left the horses, and the remainder of the expedition was performed on foot ; the western side slopes gradually down, but it is tiresome walking, the ground being encumbered with vast blocks of micaceous schistose rocks, thrown about here and there, tossed one upon the other, at times offering a very insecure footing. Bare and dreary-looking from a little distance, the interstices of these rocks are full of gay-coloured flowers, blooming in Alpine loneliness far beyond the range of a more showy vegetation. The orange-coloured lichen imparts a brilliant hue to the dark stones, while between them grow thick tufts of a bright pink daisy (*Erigeron frigidum*), and bunches of a beautiful Linaria (*Linaria glaciale*) cluster in all the crevices. Small and low, like all plants which flourish

in so elevated a region, they seek the shelter of the protecting rocks, and only await the disappearance of the snow to put forth their blossoms, while their roots twine amongst the loose stones in search of some little speck of earth to nourish them. The road winds along the edge of the dizzy precipices which fall at once into the Corral de Veleta, lying like a huge and dreary gulf some thousand feet below.

At length the summit is attained, and here from one of its loftiest peaks you may look down upon the world below. The sun was just setting. The distant vega which seemed a mere speck, was lost in a dense mist through which the rays of the sun vainly strove to pierce, and all the mountains beyond were shrouded likewise. The blue ocean lay in the far horizon, and the dark mass of the Mula Hacen, a few hundred feet loftier, rose before us, joined by a ridge of slaty rocks whose knife-like crest is quite impassable. Sloping gradually to the southern and western sides, these mountains all descend in abrupt precipices to the north and east—perpendicular heights, whose giddy edge even the boldest shrink from approaching. There is something inexpressibly grand and solemn in being at a height like this, so far above and away from the living world: overhead the bright unclouded sky; and the earth receding from below;—standing on one of these towering pinnacles, man feels his nothingness compared to the vast works of nature which lie beneath and around him. But the sun was setting, night was closing in, the lower world was losing itself in shadow, the jagged peaks were alone standing out with their gaunt unearthly forms against the sky, and we felt it was time to abandon our elevated position and retrace our steps over the loose unsteady rocks before night overtook us. We did not, however, succeed, and it

was with difficulty we had light enough to find our way back. We preferred continuing on foot, for the night was dark, only illumined by the stars, and the footing for our beasts was none the surest. How, I know not, but we lost our way, and we wandered about for an hour or two in utter ignorance of where we were; nothing could be more wretched, for the loose slaty rocks are bad enough to scramble over by day, but at night they are anything but pleasant. By dint of our guide's knowledge of the mountains we managed at length to reach the Choza, although not without having received sundry bruises in our endeavours to scramble down the declivities. We were not sorry to find our resting-place again, and welcomed it with as much joy as many a traveller would welcome the most luxurious inn. Every thing goes by comparison, and the fatiguing walk we had, had made us thankful to see the blazing fire round which our guides were most picturesquely grouped.

Our bivouac that night was wild enough; two of our party ensconced themselves in the little hut, while the rest threw down their mantas near the shelter of the rocks, and disposed themselves to sleep as best they could. The dry juniper bushes, which had been collected by some of the guides during our absence, rapidly kindled into a blazing fire, and the flames threw their lurid glare around, lighting up the rocks in all manner of strange fantastic shapes. How strange the picture which such scenes as these present—how novel the feelings they create! 8000 feet above the level of the sea, with the stars twinkling above in the dark vault of heaven; ourselves the only living beings in that vast mountain land; the men, with their mantas wrapped around them, trying to warm themselves by the fire;

their shadows flitting about among the rocks like unearthly visitants; and a stillness so profound as almost to be oppressive. We passed the night without suffering any inconvenience even from cold. Fortunately there was not any wind, or else we should not have found our airy quarters quite so pleasant. The dawning day gave us notice to arise and see the glorious sun as he gradually peered forth from behind the distant mountains; the summit of the Picacho first catching his rays; the first to welcome him, the last to bid him farewell. Soon the light was diffused over even the distant vega; and, hastening over breakfast, we started on our return, for we had a long day's march before us.

We crossed the snow-drift which lay near, and turning to the right, skirted the western slopes of the Picacho, and bent our steps towards one of those lovely little lakes which abound in these Alpine regions. We passed the source whence flows the Monachil, surrounded by the same grassy plots which mark all these springs. Soon afterwards, in winding round a low ridge of rocks, we came upon a green sward, verdant as an English meadow, the soft grass mingling with the gorgeous purple flowers of the gentian; and close to this grassy plot a small but beautiful sheet of water reflecting in its mirrored surface the snow-capped peaks of the surrounding hills. So strangely quiet and so lovely it looked, that mountain lake, we almost started as we saw the tall figure of a man seated on one of the rocks on the opposite side of the water. The clearness of the air made him appear so close and so large, he seemed like the spirit of the scene guarding the lovely waters from all intruders from the world below. He was wandering across with his flock of goats, waiting while they stopped to browse in so tempting a place. The

road across to the Alpujarras leads by this secluded spot. Ferns grow around in the crevices of the rocks, and the snow lies heavy on the peaks around. There are several of these small lakes in the Sierra Nevada which feed the streams that descend from their heights, the melting snows keeping them well supplied. The water was icy cold, and many a snow-drift was still glittering in the sun.

We now retraced our steps and crossed the summit of the ridge, whose sides slope down to the valley of the Monachil, which separates this from the Dornajo and the road by which we had ascended the day before. Barren indeed were these ridges—loose stones which afforded but a dangerous footing for the horses, and dreary beyond description. At length we descended into a valley where signs of cultivation began once more to show themselves ; the bushes and flowers which grew around denoted that we had reached the range of a more luxurious vegetation, and bade adieu to the low plants of the more elevated regions. On leaving this valley a lovely view burst upon us. The Trevenque rose in front, a bare pyramidal mountain, its naked rocks apparently destitute of all verdure ; a large oak forest swept along the base, and contrasted with the white dazzling cliffs. The Trevenque rises to the height of about 6500 feet above the level of the sea, and its summit appears almost inaccessible.

We lunched in a lovely valley at its base, under the shadow of fern trees ; it almost resembled a halt in the desert, the mountains which skirt this valley are so snowy white, painfully glaring to the eyes, and stand out against the deep azure sky in striking contrast. Once more on horseback, we left the splendid gorge of Dylar to our left, skirting the face of the mountains towards the vega. Here we passed one or two cortijos,

famous as having been robber-haunts in days gone by. A long ride brought us down behind La Zubia, and it was very late in the night before we reached Granada, our complexions not improved by the scorching we had received.

We made several excursions into the Sierra Nevada, and remained for two or three days in one of the cortijos in the valley of the Monachil. Our habitation in these secluded regions was not most inviting: a sort of loft above formed my bedroom, and when I lay awake at night, I could see the stars peeping through the rafters, and almost felt that the night in the open air at the Choza was preferable to such quarters. We scrambled up the mountains and wandered about through the valleys, chiefly in pursuit of flowers. I have seldom seen anything prettier than the Prado de las Yeguas, the long slope which falls from the rocks of San Francisco down to the valley of the Monachil; here an immense number of horses are turned out to pasture during the summer months, and roam about over its grassy land, drinking at the springs which here and there gush forth. The whole place in the month of June is enamelled with many-coloured flowers; low brushwood of the light yellow broom, the laurel-leaved cistus, the yellow barbary, and the splendid flowers of a most magnificent honeysuckle, all mingling in such profusion and with such a richness and brilliancy of colour—a perfect wilderness of every form and every hue. These prairies are covered with snow during six months of the year.

There are two or three cortijos scattered here and there, where the people live in summer to look after the flocks which come to feed in those mountain pastures, contriving at the same time to draw from the ground some scanty crops of corn. There are but few

villages on the northern sides of the Sierra Nevada, while the southern slopes are covered with towns, which formed the last strongholds of the Moors after their expulsion from Granada.

The Alpujarras, as they are called, face the sunny Mediterranean; the lower portions of their declivities are clothed with oranges and lemons, while above them vast forests of chesnuts afford pleasing and romantic scenery. We made a charming expedition to these romantic valleys, where the bold independent spirit of the mountaineers bade defiance for a long time to the hosts of Philip the Second and the brave Don John of Austria. The kindness of Talavera, the good Archbishop of Granada, comforted and assured the Moors that the treaties signed by the Christians would not be violated; but the fierce unyielding spirit of Ximenes, or Cisneros, as he is always called in Spain, soon changed the aspect of affairs, and his severity and ardour in converting them to Christianity was productive of fatal consequences. The treaties which had guaranteed them the exercise of their religion, the preservation of their costume, etc. etc., were all in turn forgotten, and oppression and cruelty drove them to rebel against their conquerors.

Charles the Fifth continued in the course Ximenes had commenced, and sought to force them into becoming Christians by every means which the spirit that reigned under the Inquisition could suggest. Every promise was broken, every compact violated; their costume forbidden, and they were even deprived of the use of their baths. But persecution never gains its end; a spirit of discontent was gradually being fostered, and at length in 1568 the smothered flames of rebellion burst forth. The signal was given, and the Moriscos were soon in arms from one end of the

Alpujarras to the other; the spirit of independence still lived in these mountain-fastnesses, and the inaccessible nature of the ground rendered the warfare difficult for the Castilian troops.

The greatest atrocities were perpetrated on both sides; no decided advantage was obtained by either party; and at length the state of the country roused the attention of the sovereign, who appointed Don John of Austria to command the troops. This brave and gallant prince, unwilling to risk tarnishing the laurels he had already won, was reluctant to take the field until the state of his forces was such as to promise him success. Much time was wasted, but eventually the rebellion was concluded by the expulsion of the Moriscoes, and the busy villages and cultivated fields were shorn of their inhabitants, and the towns which had been teeming with life and industry were left deserted. A silence as of the desert came over the land, whence hundreds of thousands were driven forth at the command of a bigoted tyrant, and the country has not yet recovered from the loss it then sustained. Those skilful hands could not be soon replaced; gardens relapsed into dreary wastes; and the expulsion of the Moors and of the Jews, which deprived the country of her most enterprising inhabitants, was fatal to her future welfare.

The road to the Alpujarras is doubly interesting, as being the one taken by Boabdil when he left his home and kingdom for the last time. After crossing the vega and passing Alhendin, a village which played its part in the great drama enacted here, the road leads over one of the low hills which here form the boundary of the plain. On the summit, your guide tells you to look round, for this is the "Ultimo Suspiro del Moro," —the last sigh of the Moor,—where Boabdil took his

farewell glance and turned away for ever from his peerless Granada. This view is so far remarkable, as being the point where you lose sight of the city. Everything in the direction of the town and vega is beautiful, while nothing can be more dreary than the view presented towards the Alpujarras ; no contrast can be greater. Nothing could be more unpromising than the country which lay before the Moorish king, as he passed over the ridge, and saw the desert extending before him, dreary as his own dark fate, with no ray of hope to brighten the future.

Padul lies in a richly cultivated valley, celebrated likewise for witnessing many a bloody fight. The range of the Sierra Nevada now rises on our left, and the valley of Durcal presents a beautiful gorge. A magnificent road is being constructed along here from Granada to Motril, which would be advantageous to the former as affording a direct communication with the sea coast. It is laid out on a stupendous plan, showing great engineering works and cuttings which would do honour to any railway ; all regardless of expense, as Spanish undertakings usually are at first : commenced on a scale of unnecessary grandeur, and of course left unfinished. In this instance, it is said that Málaga prevents the completion of it, fearing it might prove detrimental to her interests, and so there it remains. Works which might reflect credit on a line of railway are wasted on a road where nothing but strings of mules pass to and fro, conveying the fish from Motril to Granada, and the fruit which ripens on these southern shores some time before it does in the higher lands of the vega. The road crosses one stupendous gorge, a deep chasm in the sterile rocks, without a shrub on which to rest the eye, spanned by a single arch connecting the opposite sides of this rent

in the mountains. The heat was quite intense, and everything seemed on fire; the *chicharras* making such a noise it was perfectly deafening.

The path now left the Motril road, which branched off to the sea coast, and through the openings of the distant hills we caught a glimpse of the blue expanse. The ride was tiresome, the heat overpowering; and we were not sorry when turning round the brow of a hill we saw Lanjaron before us, lying on the slope of the mountain backed by the lofty range of the Sierra. Before the town, rose its old Moorish castle, perched on a steep rock rising from the valley below, on the opposite side precipitous cliffs bounding the landscape. A more enchanting view than this can be seldom seen, so many circumstances contribute to lend it such singular beauty. The lofty mountain slopes down as it were straight into the vale beneath, where every variety of vegetation which clothes the Sierra is seen at a glance. Above, the barren slaty rocks; then waving fields of corn; then vast forests of chesnuts, interspersed with the almond and the olive. Next comes the town with its white flat-roofed houses, below which the very declivities are clad with the productions of tropical climes; the orange, the citron, and the pomegranate displaying their bright green foliage. The contrast in winter must be strange indeed between the sparkling fields of snow above, and the golden fruit of the trees below.

Lanjaron is a celebrated bathing-place, and is much resorted to by the Granadinos in summer; its mineral waters were discovered in the last century, and many flock there during the bathing season. Were it in any other country it would be one of the most enchanting places in the world, for art would lend its assistance to complete and heighten the charms of nature; but here

man has not done anything. The baths are wretched places for invalids to resort to, and as to an hotel, there is hardly a decent one in the place. We stopped at the only one, and were fortunate in getting rooms; it was clean enough, but beyond a bed and a chair the rooms were destitute of furniture. Lanjaron consists of one long street, every house of which is crowded in summer, and the views from their flat roofs are perfectly enchanting. There are many beautiful walks, both above and below the town. It is delicious in the sultry heat of the day to wander through the winding paths, under the refreshing shade of the dense foliage of the Spanish chesnut, with springs of water gushing forth at every corner, and the damp mossy stones covered with fern. Every inch of the declivity is filled with gardens of figs, olives and almonds. Below the town you descend into the valley through the mass of orange trees which luxuriate on the rocky slopes, while the giant blocks of stone which lie scattered here and there in the bed of the river are covered with vines creeping over and around them and clothing them in an emerald garb, the heavy bunches of the grapes ripening as they lie upon the stones which glow with the fierce heat of the burning sun. Picturesque mills complete the scene. But little remains of the old Moorish castle. It stood many a siege, and was taken by Ferdinand himself when he advanced against it in 1500.

We could not spend more than a day in this lovely spot, where one could linger for a month and find fresh beauties. Our road led us across the valley. We roamed for two leagues along barren whitish-looking mountains, until we descended upon the valley of Orgiba, another oasis in the desert; for certainly these lovely spots in the Alpujarras are justly entitled

to such a denomination. The general character is sterile and monotonous to a degree; the white glare, unrelieved by verdure, affects the eye most painfully, but now and then you come upon spots of surpassing beauty, broad valleys encircled by mountains or little nooks where water, gushing forth in all directions, spreads fertility around. Orgiba, conspicuous from the two tall towers of its church, stands in one of these open valleys. Its olives are something wonderful in point of size, old trunks grown into odd fantastic shapes, of perfectly gigantic dimensions, their time-worn branches still laden with fruit. We only passed through the town, being anxious to go by a ravine called the Angosturas del Rio. We soon entered upon the sandy bed of the river, now a mere insignificant stream, and continued up its wide but deserted channel, the sides fringed with the oleander, the pistachio and the tamarisk. The rocks come close down to the edge of the river's bed, and form rather a wild pass through which the stream flows. One of our guides went to a large vineyard opposite, while we stopped to breakfast, to pick a supply of grapes, and here, as at Lanjaron, they twine about the rocks. We now ascended a more barren and rocky ground, leaving the ravine through which we had been riding to cross into the great valley which descends direct from the slopes of the Mula Hacen. After a long and wild ride along the crest of the ridge we descended down a broken precipice, and crossed a bridge over a chasm. The view here was charming; the water from an enormous wheel, after feeding the mills, dashed headlong down into the ravine, at the base of which the river was foaming along among huge blocks of stone. After resting here for some time we mounted again, and climbed the opposite heights amid forests of chesnut and mulberry.

We passed one or two villages, and at length reached Portugos, whence we had determined to undertake the ascent of the Mula Hacen. Trevelez, about a league or two further on, is the point generally selected as a starting-place. As the ascent, however, could be accomplished equally from Portugos, we did not see the use of going on. All these villages on the southern slopes of the Sierra bear the same character. Low mud built houses, with flat roofs, generally consisting of only one story, present a resemblance to Arab villages which cannot fail to strike the traveller here in the last stronghold of the Moor, where he naturally seeks to trace some memorial of the race. The streets, if streets they can be called, are too dirty, and almost impassable for man or beast, so crooked and uneven, they can hardly be distinguished when you survey them from the terraces of the houses. The women, too, have an oriental stamp upon their countenances, not a little increased by the manner in which they tie their handkerchiefs over their heads. Portugos did not afford very tempting accommodations ; but at last we obtained two empty rooms and beds, although not sufficient for all the party. Provisions also were not abundant in this far out-of-the-way place, raised so much above the range of civilization. The villagers in the evening flocked in to look at us, but good-humoured and civil, as Spanish peasants always are ; each in turn duly stared at the wonderful strangers who had taken so much trouble to make themselves so uncomfortable.

We started with the sun, and soon looked down upon the flat roofs of Portugos, the red towers of the churches rising conspicuously in all these mountain villages. The first part of our road took us through most romantic scenery, large forests of evergreen oak interspersed with low underwood. But we soon arrived

at the limits of such vegetation, and while the mountains rose higher around us, we kept ascending over ridges of barren rock. The wind rose as we ascended, and the cold became so intense that we hardly knew how to guard ourselves from its searching blasts. In perfect despair we took refuge behind some rocks, where, sheltered from the wind, we experienced the glowing heat of the sun, whose rays seemed to lose none of their intensity even at this elevation. We breakfasted here, and refreshed ourselves before we had courage again to face the piercing wind.

It was very disagreeable having to leave our comfortable shelter, but so far on our way, it was of no use despairing, and on we went. At length we arrived near the summit, and leaving our horses, walked up to the loftiest peak, where we whiled away an hour or two in wrapt enjoyment of the prospect before us. The feeling of being actually on the very highest summit of the chain may have some influence, but undoubtedly the view from the Mula Hacen is much finer than that from Veleta ; the Picacho forming so much grander an object from this point than the Mula Hacen does from its rival.

The summit of the Mula Hacen is formed by a narrow table-land, which shelves down gradually in every direction except to the north-west, where it terminates in a precipice. Steep cliffs connect the Mula Hacen with the Alcazaba, all these frowning heights encircling the crater of the Corral de Veleta, whence the Xenil takes its rise. The Mula Hacen, according to Boissier's measurement, is 10,980 feet. But few flowers bloom at the greatest altitude ; the small yellow poppy (P. pyrenaicum) grows, however, in great quantities among its stony masses. We lingered for some time, enjoying the prospect before us, but we had a long

road over which to retrace our steps, and the shades of night had set in long before we found ourselves established once more in our most charming quarters at Portugos.

The next day we returned to Orgiba by another road through the beautiful Barranco of Poqueira. This is one of those lovely spots which come now and then to refresh the weary traveller in Spain. Poqueira is a strange village, built on so steep a declivity that the flat roofs of the houses serve almost as a walk for the inhabitants of those above them. But such dirt! such a fraternisation of pigs and children! Below Poqueira the water foams down by a mill with one of those beautiful mountain bridges at its side, the gorge embosomed in the deep shadow of overhanging trees. Refreshing indeed are such spots in the burning heat of a July sun; here masses of green verdure soothe the eye, and ferns and mosses cover every stone, drooping over the sides of the waterfall and mingling their dew-besprinkled leaves with those of the vine and fig-tree. Here we have abundance of the two things generally wanting to make a paradise of sunny Andalucia, and which are indeed doubly prized from their very rarity. We had, however, to leave the shady glen and the crystal springs which gushed forth in every direction and recross those arid mountains against which the rays of the sun strike with tenfold vigour. Once more we passed Orgiba and returned to Lanjaron, whence we retraced our steps towards Granada.

We had explored but a small portion of the Alpujarras; but unfortunately we could not extend our tour. We much regretted not being able to visit either the old towns of Baeza and Ubeda, whose streets abound with so many antiquated façades of

old mansions of the nobility, or the ancient towers of Purchena, where Boabdil retired when he left Granada.

But the time was now approaching for our departure from this paradise of the Moor, and it was indeed with reluctance we bade adieu to our lovely garden and its terraced walk. It was in all its beauty when we left; the rich grapes were hanging in green and purple clusters from the vines; the pomegranates laden with fruit formed a perfect picture as their crimson seeds burst forth from their golden cage. There are scarcely any oranges at Granada; although growing at the same elevation at Lanjaron. They do not flourish here on the northern sides of the Sierra. The feeling that one might never revisit it made the leaving sad: one of the penalties of travelling is having to tear oneself away from places whose beauty has captivated us—from scenes on which nature has lavished her charms so profusely. We had, however, some faint idea that we might once more revisit this lovely spot and enjoy a few more summer evenings amid its pleasant groves and fairy halls. We were obliged to be at Seville by a certain day, and illness having delayed our departure from Granada, we were compelled to give up the journey round by Cordoba and take the shortest route. Our preparations were completed, and we sallied forth from the Puerta Elvira and pursued our course along the vega by Loja and Osuna: such a tiresome ride! more particularly in these autumn months, when everything is scorched and burnt.

No one who has not ridden in Spain can form any correct idea of the general aspect of this wild country, its vast monotonous plains, its wilderness of mountain chains where all is grand in its loneliness and desolation; entire tracts of country unpeopled and uncultivated

vated, covered only by low brushwood; no signs of living being, save perhaps in the far horizon some small village may be descried promising a refuge for the night. It presents far more the character of African or of Asiatic than of European scenery, and at times nothing is wanting to complete its resemblance to the former, except long trains of camels winding slowly along. Some stray muleteers meet you on the way and you pass on to find yourself once more the sole occupant of the treeless plains around you. The contrast presented by the same country in spring and autumn is very striking: in early spring the land looks green, the young corn is coming up, the grass grows on the roadside, the shrubs seem fresh; and although there may not be any timber, all nature wears a verdant garb; the wild flowers are clothed in a thousand hues, the blue iris is dotted about, and blossoms which would be the pride of many a parterre, flourish over the wide *dehesas*, interspersed among the low stiff leaves of the palmetto. But cross the same tract in autumn, when it has been exposed for months to the fierce action of the sun, without one gentle shower to mitigate the intensity of its rays, it has suddenly been transformed into a desert; not a vestige of green remains; the corn has been cut; the stubble alone is standing; every blade of grass is parched, calcined, and yellow; the plants crackle beneath your horses' feet; all is dried up, withered and covered with dust which rises in clouds at every gust of wind.

Vegetation is taking its sleep, preparing to bloom forth afresh when the November rains shall afford them their gentle nourishment. There is certainly not much enjoyment in this season, and one cannot regret that the intense heat should oblige one to rest by day, and pursue the journey at night. The ride to Loja

occupies about nine hours, and a weary one it is along a broad carriage-road, kept in good order—at least for Spain ; and Loja itself appears to have been considerably improved and embellished of late. The reason it has been so favoured is, that there is the residence of Narvaez, who, while he ruled the country with an iron hand, did not forget to benefit his own little town and look after its interests. When we passed through Loja, the Duke of Valencia was residing there in a sort of quiet retirement, away from the intrigues of court, but only awaiting his opportunity to appear again upon the stage.

The posada at Loja is decidedly not the best in Spain ; there are plenty of rooms in it and beds, but the *comedor*, as the dining-room is called, has but few attractions. The town was anciently one of the keys to the kingdom of Granada situated in a pass between two lofty hills crowned by its old castle. Here the great Captain Gonzalo de Cordoba lived, when he sought to forget, amid the splendour of his own miniature court, the neglect and ingratitude of his sovereign. We tried to ascend to the roof of the castle, and were obligingly told to enter ; and after climbing up a flight of very ricketty stairs, we found ourselves in a prettily arranged theatre. I saw, however, no signs of a view, and on asking whether there was no window whence we could look out, the man appeared intensely disgusted, evidently imagining the renown of the theatre had attracted us thither.

The following evening we met the *galera* going on to Loja from Antequera, with its eight mules. It is a perfect mystery how such heavy lumbering vehicles can traverse the roads, which seem almost impassable for horses, much more for vehicles of any description. But it is one of the wonders of Spanish travelling, how

these mules do drag carts and waggons straight across country, quite as a matter of course. They go at a snail's pace, those galeras, but still they do go, and generally reach their destination in due course.

We rode at night, passing the hill of Archidona, on the southern side of which stands the town. The salt lake of Antequera lay to our left, and we passed through Alameda and its adjacent oak-woods. The cortijos in this neighbourhood used to be celebrated as the haunts of robbers and bandits in the days of the formidable José Maria. Things have changed since then, as our ride at night would sufficiently prove, our own party, consisting only of Mr. T—— and myself, and the man to whom the horses belonged. There is something unutterably lonely in these Spanish wastes at night, without even the moon at times to light up the scene around ; the dark vault above, lighted only by the glittering stars ; no sound save now and then the bark of some shepherd's dog sounding in the distance, telling of the existence of life ; all tranquil and dark, the very essence of silence and of solitude. And when you plunge into the oak-woods there is a mysterious darkness and tranquillity, which incline one to start at the slightest sound. These places are indeed fit haunts for the bandit, and one could almost fancy the ghost of some robber-chief flitting behind the trunks of the tangled oaks waiting to pounce upon his prey. As the traveller, whose imagination has long looked forward to some charming adventure whenever he should explore the enchanted land called Spain, cannot easily gratify his fond anticipations, he may be allowed at least the innocent amusement of peopling these wild dehesas with them in his mind's eye. Yet there are many even in this day, who would not undertake such a ride as we did ; certainly not an English

lady I met once, who after making the journey from Granada to Málaga with safety in a diligence, declared it was wonderful how they had escaped being robbed, for they saw the banditti standing on almost every rock as they came along. Poor people! it is a pity that honest Spanish peasants will look picturesque and robber-like, and thus foster a delusion so fatal to the good character of their country. Doubtless, the Melodrame has much to say to it; for with their cloaks thrown over their shoulders, their sombrero with its knowing-looking silky tufts at the side, their black moustache, and dark flashing eyes, and the musket on which they lean to gaze upon the traveller as he passes, they seem the very heroes for a tragic scene. How should the traveller know, when he sees them in such suspicious costume, whether their weapons be prepared for murder or more peaceful objects? It is a singular fact, but I hardly ever met travellers in Spain who had not had some miraculous escape; who had not passed by half-an-hour before they were to be attacked, or half-an-hour after the robbers had left their ambuscade, but I never yet met with one who had arrived just at the moment when the robbers would have been ready to receive them; and what is still more strange, we were ourselves destined to add to that remarkable list; but I must not anticipate.

However, although they do not often attack travellers, there is no doubt that robbers still exist in Andalucia; but the race of those who were "muy caballero," very gentlemanlike, is extinct. There are no more José Marias, who come and visit the great people in Seville and other towns, and interchange civilities when they meet unexpectedly on the road. Many and amusing are the anecdotes still told of these courteous knights.

Once upon a time a party of them attacked a diligence in which there happened to be a grandee, who had always highly favoured the robbers whenever his influence could be of any avail ; but his kindness did not save him now. He happened to have a considerable sum of money with him, and it was all appropriated. His " Excelencia " was a great devotee and most peculiar worshipper of the Señora de las Angustias, the patron of Granada, a golden medallion of whom he always wore round his neck ; and the robbers espied this prize, but when its meaning was explained to them, they returned it with the most polished courtesy, and begged him to keep it, praying that it might watch over him and preserve him from all robbers !

From Alameda you pass on to Osuna, but although we made the journey in perfect safety, I would not recommend any one who can avoid it to follow in our footsteps. A more wearisome journey I never made ; no object of interest on the road—a ride which even in spring could offer but few attractions, and at this season of the year perfectly detestable. It is far better either to go round by Ronda, or by Cordoba. I never felt more rejoiced than when we reached Alcalá de Guadaira, a town about two leagues from Seville, where we entered on the high road from that city to Madrid. The sun was just rising as we passed, and before us lay stretched an olive-coloured plain, with a tall tower rising in the distance. That tower was the Giralda, whose square and lofty substantial-looking edifice, at that distance, gives no promise of its beauty and elegance. We crossed by a small path through the olives, leaving the high road on our right. The white cortijos warned us of our approach to the town, and at the Cruz del Campo we beheld the city lying before us. We soon reached it, and at last found ourselves winding through its

narrow streets of dazzling whiteness, and were at once struck by the oriental appearance given to it by the awnings spread from house to house, shading the streets. We were in Seville! the rival of Granada, whose Cathedral and whose Tower are alone worthy of a pilgrimage.

LA CAMPANERA.

CHAPTER VI.

Insigne Catedral donde Dios vive
Eternamente, donde el cuerpo santo
Del rey conquistador culto recibe;
Dó yace el sabio rey, dó brilla tanto
Trofeo de victoria,
Encanto, iglesia, monumento, historia.
Mientras mas te contemplo y mas te admiro,
Mas entusiasmo y pura fé respiro . . .
Salve portento santo sin segundo,
Gloria de España, admiracion del mundo.

DUQUE DE RIVAS.

SEVILLE — STRIKING PECULIARITIES — THE GIRALDA—LA CAMPANERA — SCENERY — EFFECTS OF DISTANCE ON THE CONSCIENCE—MOORISH AND CHRISTIAN ARCHITECTURE—THE CATHEDRAL—EASTER SUNDAY—ST. FERDINAND—MIRACULOUS IMAGES—PAINTINGS—TOMB OF F. COLUMBUS—CHURCH TREASURY—SEISES—SERMONS—BULA DE LA STA. CRUZADA—STATE OF RELIGION—THE CLERGY—REVIVAL OF THE CONVENTS—RECEPTION OF A NUN.

THE first thing which arrests the traveller's attention on entering Seville in summer, is the peculiar character

presented by the town. It possesses the most powerful charm in its novelty, for I am not aware there is anything like it, certainly not in Europe, where it stands alone. The houses, consisting for the greater part of only two stories, are all whitewashed, their dazzling brightness proving most painful to the eye under the glare of an Andalucian sun. As you pass along the narrow and tortuous streets, you are struck by the manner in which everybody appears to be living in public, open to the gaze of all the passers-by ; you find the large wooden doors wide open, and a small hall terminating in a door of elaborately ornamented open iron-work, admitting a full view of the exquisite marble court within. These *patios,* as they are called, are generally filled with gaudy-coloured flowers, bushes of myrtle or of box, and tall orange-trees rising amongst them with their golden fruit : in the centre, a fountain, with its sparkling water spreading freshness around. The patio is surrounded by a gallery, supported on slender white marble columns, under which the family spend their time in summer. A thick canvass is drawn across from roof to roof, which excludes the heated air and fierce rays of the sun, and under this grateful awning the family repose, and enjoy the refreshing shade. But here they are in public, nothing between them and the street except the open iron-work, the *cancela.* The intense heat of summer prevents many from going about in the day-time ; but towards evening the streets of Seville present quite a fairy scene,—the marble courts, with the bright lights of hanging lamps shining among the flowers, the figures of their inmates sitting round in lively conversation, or striking now and then the chords of the guitar, whose wild notes accompany the still wilder songs, the sound of the castanets keeping time to the merry dance, all

enjoying themselves in the delicious coolness of the evening air. This is a picture of life which must certainly be considered as peculiar to Seville, lending from its strangeness a tinge of oriental romance to this fair city. And yet, if we only consider for a moment, nothing can be more uncongenial to Eastern manners than such a life. Eastern nations bury themselves in the interior of their houses, far removed from the public gaze; carefully excluding their domestic circle from every eye; deep in the inmost recesses of their dwellings; a mode of living which affords a complete contrast to that of the inhabitants of Seville. It is like Seville and Seville alone, for nowhere else is there anything of the kind. The style of the houses, to say the truth, reminds one more of the plan of those of Pompeii than any others I have ever seen; and may it not have been borrowed in the first instance—long before the Moors put a foot in Spain—from the neighbouring city of Italica? Be this as it may, they have a charming appearance, which is, however, lost to the traveller who only sees the town in winter, for the patio life ends in September, and does not recommence until May.

The families, who reside on the first floor in winter, migrate to the ground floor when the heat commences, taking with them all their furniture, which is arranged in the rooms opening out of the patio; even the doors and windows in many instances being removed, as they are made to fit both floors. Many of the larger palaces of the nobility have gardens as well as courts, where oranges and myrtles flourish in great luxuriance, the former perfuming the air in spring with the delicious odour of their snowy blossoms.

We had a splendid house, as far as the size of its patio, garden, and rooms were concerned. It had been uninhabited for many years, and was much neglected,

but it was a most enjoyable winter residence. There was a large terrace looking upon a garden full of orange trees, where the sun was often too hot even in the winter to venture sitting there in the middle of the day. Most of the houses have a terrace on the roofs, although they are not generally flat as in Cadiz; and from ours we could look down into the bull-ring, and catch a glimpse of the arena—a distant vision of it, sufficient for those who had not learned to steel their hearts against its horrors. We could hear the shouts that accompanied the performance of every feat, and could tell each act in succession by the sounds of the music.

It is quite as difficult to get houses in Seville as in any other part of Spain. Furnished houses are not to be met with, and those which are unfurnished can scarcely be procured for less than a twelvemonth. In Seville, as in all warm climates, the invalid requires apartments facing the sun, for the narrow streets, delicious as they are in summer, strike most cold and damp in winter. We were settling ourselves there for a lengthened residence, and naturally enough took the tiresome duty of sight-seeing more tranquilly than birds of passage, who have to do the lions in the space of four-and-twenty hours—a period of time I have heard many travellers say sufficed to see the whole of Seville. Ample time, certainly, to have a general view of it from the summit of the Giralda; but the treasures of art which it contains would delay the traveller for many and many a four-and-twenty hours within its walls.

The pride and glory of Seville bear witness to the domination of both Moor and Christian. The Giralda and the Cathedral bear the stamp of their respective architects, each alone and unequalled. We will first turn our steps to the famous tower from whence the call to prayer was once re-echoed by a thousand

minarets, and where now the Christian bells summon the faithful to their devotions. The matchless Giralda ! the wonder of Seville, the "maravilla" of which she is so justly proud ! Commenced by the Moor, it was completed by the Christian, and, for a wonder, the addition enhanced instead of detracting from its elegance. It was built in 1196 by one of the rulers of the Almohades, and dearly was it prized by the Moors. When the city was besieged by the Christians, its inhabitants petitioned, as one of the conditions of surrender, that they should be allowed to destroy both the Mosque and its tower ; but the Infante, afterwards Alfonso el Sabio, declared that if they touched one brick he would put them all to the sword—a menace which has preserved to posterity one of the most exquisite towers in the world.

The Moorish erection is square, about 240 feet in height, its sides ornamented with the interlacing arches so general on all Moorish towers, both here and at Toledo. The summit is reached by a succession of inclined planes, which turn five-and-thirty times, and form a very easy ascent. Light is admitted through Moorish windows pierced through the thickness of the walls, forming recesses of considerable size. One of these is fitted up as a shrine to the Virgin, and a dark-eyed maiden, the niece of the old keeper of the tower, is its attendant guardian. Seated in the opposite recess, or leaning on the open balcony, you may daily see the daughter of the Giralda embroidering robes to deck the sacred image, or preparing her own for her evening occupation—for "la Campanera" is a dancer at the Opera.

In 1568 the present tower was raised another 100 feet, and the whole surmounted by a gigantic bronze figure of Faith, standing on a globe, holding in her

hand a banner which causes the figure to veer round with the wind. Numbers of bells are placed here, all named after some saint, according to the usual custom. The view from this tower, although it does not offer the grandeur of mountain scenery, is very charming. It presents a bright and sunny picture, and includes many objects of great interest. Underneath, and attached to the very walls of the Giralda, is the Cathedral with its flying buttresses and decorated pinnacles, and around is a chaos of tiled roofs intermingled with terraces. Here and there an open space may be discerned, indicating a square, but not a street is to be seen, as from their extreme narrowness nothing but a small division is perceptible between the houses. The town stands in an extensive plain, on the left bank of the river, which flows in numerous windings through its olive-clothed banks. The opposite suburb, Triana, is connected with Seville by an iron bridge only lately completed. Beyond Triana rises a low ridge of well-cultivated hills, crowned by snow-white villages. San Juan de Alfarache, with its ruined convent, overhanging the river; Castilleja de la Cuesta, where Hernan Cortes breathed his last; Santi Ponce, with its dilapidated monastery, where repose the ashes of Guzman el Bueno; Italica, the birthplace of Trajan and of Adrian, with its amphitheatre, which is all that remains to tell of its Roman founders; beyond, the distant plains bounded by the faint outline of the Sierra Morena. The eye sweeps round the plain, which is encircled by rising ground, where stand the white houses of Carmona; nearer, the towers of the old Moorish castle of Alcalá de Guadaira crown the heights; in the distance the jagged outline of the Ronda-chain; and, far far away, in the blue horizon to the west, where earth and sky seem to blend together, the river loses

itself in the flat plains which stretch to the sea-coast. The country all around is covered with olive and orange-groves to the very walls of Seville. Just outside lies an open space — the Campo Santo, now crowded in spring with the gay multitudes who assemble for the fair ; little dreaming over the scenes enacted in former days, and careless of the fact that there the Inquisition held its Autos de Fé.

Such is the pleasant prospect which greets the traveller as he gazes on the scene around from the famed Giralda. From this height a miniature view can be obtained of the distant bull ring. It is a convenient post for those whose susceptibility or principle forbids their being present at such a spectacle as a bull-fight, and yet whose curiosity would fain be gratified. From here they can view it, divested of its horrors ; and I have known more than one traveller, and reverend divines among the number, who, considering it wrong to attend such an amusement on a Sunday, yet mounted up to have a peep at it from this lofty tower. Here, on the summit of the Giralda, the mind goes back to meditate on the past history of this far-famed city, where each succeeding race has left some impress of its sway, and as the eye wanders over the panorama and rests upon the various objects around, the mind reads a tale in the different edifices within view, and sees all the various changes in these living pages of history.

Seville was a Roman town, made into a capital by Julius Cæsar, who is said to have raised its walls, and who gave it the name of Romula. When the Gothic sway existed in the Peninsula it was a favourite residence of the sovereigns. But they passed away, and were succeeded by the Moslem, who has stamped his seal on the buildings around. The tower of the

Giralda itself, and many others rising above the closely packed roofs of the town, speak of their rule; they too have vanished, but they have left ample traces of their passage. Cordoba was their capital, but after the fall of the Omeyah dynasty, Seville became the centre of one of those independent sovereignties which sprang up when dissensions became rife amongst them. As the eye looks down from the Giralda, it rests upon Moorish tracery and horse-shoe arches, while above it beholds the portion added by the Christians, surmounted by a statue of Faith. This edifice, commenced by the followers of Mohammed, crowned and completed by the servants of Christ, recalls the time when the great St. Ferdinand sat down with all his host before the walls of Seville. It was in 1247 that the sovereign of Castile, elated with the conquest of Cordoba and other towns, laid siege to Seville, and after many a deed of prowess had been performed, it surrendered on the 23rd Nov., 1248.

There, on the very spot where the Mosque once stood, rises now the temple dedicated to the faith of the conqueror, the grandest edifice that man has raised for the worship of his Maker. There they are, side by side—the triumph of the Christian and the Moor. The most striking view of the exterior of the Cathedral is seen from the gate of the Alcazar, which is close by, and whose eastern architecture speaks again of the domination of both races in this city; its Moorish patios and Alhambra-like traceries still attracting the admiration of the traveller. Another large square building rises close behind the Cathedral, marking another epoch in Spanish history — the Lonja or Exchange, a master-piece of Herrera's, raised in the reign of Philip II., when the daily increasing commerce of the New World compelled her merchants

to provide themselves with some place of meeting. It was then that Seville prospered; but from that period her splendour has decreased; and the tasteless edifice of San Telmo, with its leaden roofs rising above the trees of the great promenade, tells of the decline of taste in the eighteenth century. What monument will rise in the nineteenth? Alas, for poetry and romance! a railway station will probably stamp it with its iron hand, and the tall chimneys of some gas or chemical works spring up to rival the Giralda—at least in altitude.

Sadly matter-of-fact is this our age; and who can tell which were the wiser in their generation, the races past or present; those who devoted their fortunes and their lives to the erection of religious edifices and matchless churches, or those who, caring for nothing but money-making, sacrifice all at the feet of Mammon? Everything has its extremes, and may not we be going too much into the latter? "People loved God more in those days than they do now," said an old Castilian peasant to me one day, as I was admiring the superb façade of a now dilapidated convent. There was more meaning in that simple speech than he dreamt of. However, Spain must go on, for now she is in a transition state; she has neither the piety of past ages, nor the practical enterprise of the present. Nothing could tend more to improve the country than the establishment of great main lines of railway, and the formation of good roads in parts which are now almost unattainable, from the want of communication. She has immense wealth in the countless ores of her Sierras, and the rich produce of her land, teeming with grain and oil; but she wants—to use a common-place of the day—some means of developing her resources, under the guidance of a wise and honest government. This

peep at past ages from the top of the Giralda has led to a very matter-of-fact reflection on the present; and the dissertation, which began with the works of Julius Cæsar, has ended with those of Stephenson. The latter have not, however, yet been raised on the ruins of the former; and while the Spaniards are talking of all the roads that are to bind the extremities of the Peninsula in a network of iron, we may as well satisfy ourselves with taking a glance at Seville as it is, without speculating on what she might, or hereafter may be.

The whole square pile of buildings, comprising the Cathedral, Giralda, Sagrario or parish church and chapels, is raised on a sort of platform, round which runs a broad pavement ascended by steps. An old Moorish doorway, called the Puerta del Perdon, washed, not white but yellow, and decorated with Christian saints, leads into the orange court which formerly graced the entrance to the Mosque. The fountain used by the Moors still exists, and on one side is a pulpit, where San Vicente de Ferrer, the great Valencian saint, used to preach. A side-door under a covered gallery opens into the Cathedral. On first entering, from the bright light outside, it seems hardly possible to pierce the darkness which pervades this wondrous pile; but a few moments suffice to render it more distinct, and then it gradually discloses itself in all its vast sublimity.

At length the eye, attuned to the scene, begins to pierce the dimly lighted aisles; the massive pillars that support its vaulted roof come forth from the gloom which shrouded them; the gilded rejas of the altar and the choir, the chequered marble pavement, the side-chapels beneath the lofty arches, stand revealed; and the mind, disturbed by no meretricious ornaments or frivolous details, seizes on the whole.

Awed and wonderstruck by the solemn grandeur of this unmatched Cathedral, you stand and watch the lights which play across the aisles, as the rays of the sun pour through the rich windows of painted glass, illuminating with rainbow hues the portions on which they fall. Cold indeed must be the heart, which does not feel that here he may worship God in a temple worthy of his faith. The massive proportions of the edifice, the dark colour of the stone, the absence of all ornament or detail, the mysterious light which pervades the whole, all combine to produce an impression which must for ever be stamped in indelible characters on the memory.

The forms of Gothic architecture, which bear the mind soaring heavenwards, always appear more in harmony with the Christian faith than any other ; and a temple like this impresses the mind with feelings which are never experienced even beneath the stately dome of St. Peter's. The towering piers, the pointed arches losing themselves in the groined vaults above, are doubly felt amid the gloom which reigns in Seville Cathedral, rendering every object so undefined, and leaving full scope to the imagination to dwell on all the fancied significations of its design ; spiritualising each aspiring line, and discovering a thousand meanings of which the architect himself but little dreamed.

And who raised this edifice? History has not preserved his name. The architect who designed the plans remains unknown, although several are mentioned as having superintended the works during their progress. In 1401 the Dean and Chapter, and other dignitaries of the cathedral of Seville, met to decide on the erection of a new church, the one they had, the ancient Mosque, threatening to fall. After due deliberation, they decided on building a cathedral so fair

and beautiful that it should be without an equal; and should the rents not suffice for its construction, they would give all that was required, and thus devote their fortunes to the service of their God. Above one hundred years were occupied in its erection, and it was not until 1519 that the edifice was completed.

The nave rises to the height of 146 feet. There are six side aisles; four are of equal height, although not so lofty as the nave; and this circumstance adds peculiarly to the grandeur of the Cathedral. The two lateral aisles are railed off, and divided into chapels. It is not built in the shape of a cross, but a simple parallelogram, the form of the Mosque on whose site it was erected. It is not finished with a cupola, as such edifices generally are, but the groining of the vaulted roof between the high altar and the choir, which here rises to the height of 170 feet, is elaborately ornamented with rich Gothic tracery, the remainder being quite plain. As usual, the length and breadth is sadly broken by the choir, which being in the centre of the nave, intercepts the view, and renders it impossible for the eye to embrace the whole. The high altar is enclosed by a gorgeous screen of iron-work, richly gilt; it was completed in 1533, and is the work of a Fray Francisco de Salamanca. The public are not permitted to enter within its precincts; but on great occasions, when the members of the Ayuntamiento attend, they have seats within the rails: this was the place formerly occupied by the Tribunal of the Inquisition. The Infanta, when she attends any service at the Cathedral, has a throne erected for her on the right of the altar, likewise within the reja. Behind the high altar rises one of the most splendid retablos in Spain. It is carved in *alerce*, a wood which used to abound, although it has now entirely disappeared from the face

of the country. It is of Gothic architecture, divided into thirty-six niches, each filled with scenes in the life of Our Saviour ; the figures are nearly of the size of life, and are most exquisitely sculptured. It is a triumph of art, but unfortunately the gloom which pervades the building prevents its being seen to advantage.

There is something unutterably grand in this temple; no tawdry images—no tinsel ornaments detract from its simplicity. At all times, and at all hours of the day, it discloses some fresh beauty—at early morning, when the rising sun casts his beams through the painted glass, gilding here and there some giant pillar, and a few early worshippers are scattered through its aisles, attending to the mass celebrated in the different chapels :—at mid-day, when the doors are closed, and it rises in all its grand proportions, without a living being to disturb the tranquil grandeur of the scene :—and, at eve, when the varied tints of the setting sun, shining upon the windows, make them glow with the jewelled light of emeralds and rubies, and the building itself becomes obscured in the growing darkness.

On such festivals as Easter Sunday, when the church displays all her pomp and ceremonial, the scene during high mass is unequalled. Then the thrilling tones of the organ fall upon the ear, in deep devotional sounds, re-echoing through its lofty aisles ; the sun, streaming in, lights up the crucifix above the retablo, while clouds of incense ascend to the vaulted roof, and the dense throng around kneel in mute and silent worship at the elevation of the consecrated host. And again, when the host is manifested, and the altar is decked with its costly statues and splendid frontal of solid silver, illumined by countless tapers and crowned by its jewelled remonstrance, the effect is

magical; for the rest of the building is enveloped in the deepest gloom, and the altar itself stands out like a pyramid of light amid the darkness which surrounds it. It is beautiful at all times; it leads the mind to contemplation; a sentiment of religious awe takes possession of the soul, and you feel it a privilege to worship the Almighty in such a temple.

Behind the Capilla Mayor, in a large and lofty chapel, but not of Gothic architecture, repose the ashes of Saint Ferdinand, who won Seville from the Moor. He died here soon after the Conquest in 1252. His son, Alfonso el Sabio, is likewise buried here, as well as Maria de Padilla, the celebrated mistress of Pedro the Cruel. The body of Saint Ferdinand lies before the high altar, and in the retablo is placed an image of the Virgen de los Reyes, the favourite guardian of the pious monarch. Another smaller image of the Virgin, called St. Maria de la Sede, to whom the cathedral is dedicated, stands upon the high altar in the Capilla Mayor. The Virgen de los Reyes is said to be of miraculous origin.

During the siege, Saint Ferdinand dreamed of a lovely statue of the Madonna, and summoned all the artists of his court to realise the vision of celestial beauty which had appeared to him. Many tried to satisfy their sovereign, but in vain; at length one presented himself, and promised to produce a statue such as was required. He stipulated that he should have a house to himself and provisions for a fortnight, and that no one should disturb him during that period. The given time elapsed, even more passed away, but there were not any signs of the sculptor, and the impatient sovereign ordered the house to be broken into; the provisions were found untouched, and the image of the Virgin completed, identical with the one

which had appeared to Saint Ferdinand in his dream. But the artist was gone, no trace of him could be discovered, and the natural conclusion arrived at was that it had been the work of supernatural hands, and the image was reverenced accordingly. No one has ever ventured to examine this statue, to discover of what material it is made ; and although Spaniards are on rather free and easy terms with such images in general, they have left this one untouched. Scandal, however, whispers that, once upon a time, an inquisitive canon, blessed with a curiosity, most unfairly considered an essential attribute of the weaker sex, actually dared to take an unholy peep and touch the embroidered garments : his temerity was punished with an attack of blindness, which put an effectual end to his discoveries.

In the adjoining chapel of San Pedro is a retablo containing some beautiful pictures by Zurbaran, but this part of the cathedral, in particular, is so dreadfully dark, that it is quite impossible to see them properly. A small altar, near the principal entrance from the Orange Court, in the north transept, contains a lovely painting of the Virgin and Child by Cano. This is one of the gems of the Cathedral—a heavenly spiritualised Virgin, like the Madonnas of the Italian school, ideal and beautiful ; a countenance such as becomes the blessed mother of our Lord. On the same side, in the chapel containing the baptismal font, is the celebrated St. Anthony of Murillo, by many considered his *chef-d'œuvre*. The Infant Saviour appears to the Saint amid a glory of cherubs, lovely as such creations of Murillo's generally are ; the Saint kneels before the holy vision.

Over an altar near the grand entrance is a lovely picture by the same great master ; the Guardian Angel, who is leading a child by the hand. The child is

exquisite, looking up with a sweet confiding expression to the angel, who points with his hand to heaven. None of these pictures can, however, be really seen and examined ; the darkness in the Cathedral may add to its grandeur as a whole, but it effectually conceals the beauty of the paintings which adorn its chapels. There are likewise two remarkable pictures by Luis de Vargas, one of the Nativity, the other called, " La Generacion," representing Adam and the patriarchs looking up to the Virgin, who appears with her Son in the clouds. It is better known by the name of " La Gamba," from the masterly foreshortening of Adam's leg. Vargas was born in 1502, and studied for many years in Italy ; he is one of the earliest painters of renown in the Seville school, and his works bear more the stamp of the Italian style than the generality of those of Spanish masters.

A gigantic San Cristobal adorns the wall, close to the altar, over which the Gamba is painted. It is the production of one Mateo Perey Alesio, and is upwards of thirty feet in height. This Saint is always represented crossing a river, with a palm-branch in his right hand, bearing the Infant Christ on his shoulder, and a hermitage visible in the distance. The figure of this Saint is frequently painted at the entrance of churches, for when St. Christopher was martyred, he prayed that all who were present and believed in the Saviour should not suffer from tempest, earthquake, or fire. Hence, sprung up the superstition that, " Whosoever shall behold the image of St. Christopher, on that day shall not faint nor fail." The legend, which has given rise to the generally received representation of him, is perhaps one of the most beautiful allegories pourtrayed by Christian Art. It is charmingly described by Mrs. Jameson in her " Sacred and Legendary Art."

It is strange how few interest themselves in these legends of the early Christian Church ; and how we pass, unheeded, subjects which have engrossed the pencil of the greatest painters, with the satisfactory reflection, that "they refer to some saint or another," never caring to know the origin of the story, or learn what beautiful allegory may lie concealed beneath the tale these paintings are meant to illustrate.

A very handsome chapel is dedicated to the Virgen de la Antigua. The silver railings, and other ornaments of the altar, are very costly. In the retablo is an old Byzantine picture, which is said to have remained in the Mosque during the whole of the Moorish dominion. In an adjoining chapel is a fine old tomb of a prelate, and the retablo is decorated with a statue of St. Hermenigild, by Montañes.

In the nave, between the grand entrance and the choir, in that portion of the church which they call in Spain the trascoro, lie the ashes of Fernando, the son of Christopher Columbus. On a marble slab let into the pavement is a Latin epitaph, and, beneath, the arms, with the well-known inscription, "A Castilla y á Leon nuevo mundo dió Colon." These words have given rise to the often-repeated assertion that Columbus himself was buried here, whereas his bones really rest in the Havannah, in the new world which he discovered. On each side of the stone are engraved two strange-looking ships, copies of the caravels which bore the great navigator across the waters of the Atlantic.

Such are some of the principal objects of interest of which this wondrous edifice can boast ; and besides these, are the Chapter-house and Sacristy. In the latter may still be found some remains of the trèasures it once contained, of jewels, and gold and silver plate,

before the hand of the invader despoiled the churches of their wealth. The Sacristy is a fine building in the Græco-romano style. Here is kept the beautiful silver Custodia of Juan de Arfe. It is in the form of a temple, and of exquisite workmanship. The Arfes were the Cellinis of Spain : they flourished in Valladolid about the middle of the sixteenth century. In almost all the cathedrals some trace of their workmanship is preserved. Much, however, was destroyed during the French invasion, when master-pieces of art, which can never be replaced, were melted down or carried away. The Custodia is the tabernacle in which the host is deposited on Holy Thursday, and where it is carried in procession through the streets on the Festival of the Corpus. There are some beautiful chalices and reliquaries of elaborate workmanship ; and, amongst many valuable objects, the most interesting are the keys presented to Saint Ferdinand upon the surrender of Seville.

The identical key said to have been delivered up by the Moslem chieftain is made of iron, and contains the following inscription in Arabic :—"May Allah permit the empire of Islam to endure for ever in this city." Ancient authorities say the purport of the inscription is the same as that upon the silver key, which has in Spanish, "Dios abrirá, Rey entrará." The latter was presented to Ferdinand by the Jews after the conquest. The former interpretation seems far more suitable to an Arabic inscription, and such it has been decided to be by that celebrated scholar Don Pascual de Gayangos, according to the statement of Amador de los Rios, in his "Sevilla Pintoresca."

A splendid cross used for grand ceremonials, the superb stand for the candles used during matins on the three last days of the Holy Week, and the gorgeous vestments of the clergy with the frontals of the altar,

are among the things worth examining in this museum of art. The Chapter-house is a beautiful plateresque saloon of the same date as the Sacristy, and is adorned with paintings by Murillo, Cespedes, and Pacheco. At the opposite corner of the Cathedral stands the Sagrario, or parish church. It is a large oblong building, not remarkable for anything particular.

There is one most singular ceremony which takes place in this cathedral, and one quite peculiar to Seville —that is, the dancing before the high altar during the octaves of the Festivals of the Corpus and the Conception, and the three last days of carnival. The principal actors in this extraordinary scene are the Seises ; boys belonging to the cathedral, whose number was originally six, as their name indicates, but they consist in reality of ten. They are placed in the open space in front of the altar within the iron screens. Five stand on either side, opposite to each other ; they begin a slow and measured movement, singing hymns to the patroness of Spain, and keep time with their ivory castanets, which form a strange accompaniment to the orchestra and strike one as very discordant with the holiness of the building. They dance for about half-an-hour, and then the magnificent organs pour forth their swelling notes through the vaulted aisles, the curtain veils the host, and the bells of the Giralda ring, while the throng who had assembled to witness the dancing leave the Cathedral. These boys are dressed in the costume of the seventeenth century ; they wear tunics of white and blue silk, their hats are looped up with a plume of feathers, a scarf is fastened across their shoulders, and a silk mantle hangs behind.

The Cathedral of Seville boasts of being the only one where dancing is permitted, but there does not seem any authentic account of how such a singular custom

originated. A tradition in the town traces it to the time of the conquest of Seville by the Moors ; they say that as the infidels entered the church, a party of young men commenced dancing before them and continued dancing until they reached the high altar, whence one of them took the host, and concealing it in his dress, contrived thus to rescue it from the hands of the Moslem ; in memory of which they have been allowed to dance before it. This is, however, but a doubtful legend ; the practice is more generally supposed to be a relic of the dances which accompanied the Procession of the Corpus in early times. They are mentioned, as existing in the Cathedral, in a Papal Bull dated 1439. Another story says, that an archbishop of Seville, who lived towards the close of the seventeenth century, was very anxious to do away with the dancing of the Seises as an exhibition unbecoming the sanctity of the Cathedral, when the Dean and Chapter were so indignant that they sent them all off in a ship to Rome to dance before his Holiness, in order that he might judge from personal experience whether there was anything indecorous in their performances. They were allowed to continue, and confirmed in their privilege of dancing, with their heads covered, before the Sacrament ; but this privilege was only to continue so long as the dresses they then wore should last, for which reason their costume is never entirely renewed, some little patch of the old garments still remaining.

Be it as it may, there they are dancing, as each festival returns, before the altar of the Cathedral, to the music of the castanets. They belong chiefly to the middle class, the sons of tradesmen. They cannot aspire to the post of seises after they are ten years old ; it seems the Chapter are not such good judges of

music as formerly, for the voices of the seises do not now reflect much credit upon their selection, and they used to be the best voices in the choir.

The services in the Cathedral are performed with all becoming solemnity. There is generally a sermon preached on Sunday morning during the celebration of high mass : these discourses are generally very good, and the text is almost always taken from the Gospel for the day, the preacher seldom touching on any polemical point. Sermons of the latter description are generally reserved for the Novenarios, or nine days celebration of particular festivals, when the most eloquent preachers are selected. Of all European languages, perhaps Spanish is that which strikes the ear as being the noblest in the pulpit. The grandeur of its sound, its majestic high-flown phrases, the gravity and solemnity of its tone, render it indeed the language for oratory. The very grandiloquent style, which sounds to English ears so absurd in the common affairs of life, becomes an additional beauty in fervid discourse. Some of their preachers can boast of wonderful eloquence ; they work upon the imagination by their poetical and enthusiastic language, which carries one away at the moment, although, upon reflection, there is little substance in their sermons. Indeed, the critical and argumentative does not suit the genius of the language. They are all delivered as if extempore, but in many instances prepared with great care and study.

There are two very interesting historical sermons preached during the year, the one on the anniversary of the surrender of Seville, the other on the Sunday following the proclamation of the Bull of the Santa Cruzada. Both these occasions give the preacher ample field for enlarging on the ancient glories of Spain,

the triumph of Castilian arms, and the untiring zeal which never relaxed in its efforts until the Crescent was subdued, and which obtained for her inhabitants favours not granted to any other European nation. The Bull of the Santa Cruzada was granted by Innocent III. to the Spanish crusaders, and is a dispensation which allows of Spaniards eating meat in Lent and other fast days. It is generally bought for the enormous sum of five reals, about a shilling, but the amount should vary according to the income. The money thus raised went at first to the objects of the crusade, and subsequently to the Church; but it now forms no inconsiderable item in the yearly budget, swelling considerably the coffers of the State. A Spaniard has defined this Bull to be "the worst and dearest paper sold in Spain."

The clergy may boast in their pulpits of the manner in which Spain still upholds the faith of her ancestors. In name, it is true, it does; but in deed, alas! how little of its purity remains. Among the lower classes it may still linger, and in early morn the country churches may yet be crowded with devotees; but in the towns, and among the upper and middle classes, all true religious feeling seems almost dead. To outward ceremonial they still conform; but, as to faith and real belief, they have little now remaining; the influence of the clergy has passed away, and Spaniards who were never loth to indulge in a laugh at the priesthood, have ended by looking with indifference on religion itself. The tone of their conversation is sad to listen to. Many may have been the causes, but surely a great deal must be attributed to the clergy themselves; were their own conduct what it ought to be, had they inculcated the spirit of their faith by their words and illustrated it by their actions, they would not have fallen so low as they have done; nor would they have

brought such discredit on the religion they profess. I speak of course of the body, for, doubtless, there always have been among them, and still are, many estimable men.

The spirit of intolerance which has forbidden the outward exercise of any but the dominant faith in Spain, has forced those who could not bow with true belief to its doctrines to become quite incredulous, veiling their unbelief by an outward regard to ceremonial, while scepticism had taken possession of their hearts. Let all be allowed the free exercise of their opinions and the country would gain in many respects. The clergy would become more circumspect in their conduct, and cast off a thousand idle practices which disfigure the Church of Spain. They are fatally mistaken if they imagine by encouraging such things, they gain more hold of the people, even apart from the immorality of deception. They may over the ignorant who believe all they are told, but those who have sense and judgment of their own, begin to doubt; and when doubt has once entered into the human mind, who can tell where it will stop? Will it be content to brush away the mere idle practices, and leave the essence untouched? The Bravo Murillo government have been endeavouring to revert, at least to some extent, to the former state of things, and restore the power of the clergy by re-establishing the regular orders. For this purpose peace was made with Rome, whose Sovereign Pontiff had not looked upon Spain with a very favourable eye since the period when Church property had been confiscated. A concordat has been signed; convents and monasteries are to be allowed in Spain, and the nunneries are once more permitted to receive inmates within their walls.

A perfect mania has seized on all the young ladies since the late permission was accorded, and the convents are now filling fast. Between three and four hundred have

entered in Seville alone, although how many may remain to take the black veil is still to be seen. The nuns who were in the convents at the time of their dissolution might have left and returned to the world, but hardly any throughout Spain availed themselves of the permission. Those who did so were allowed a peseta a day, barely a shilling, and few can form any idea of the misery that was experienced within those walls for some years afterwards; their small stipend not even paid, and many who had no kind relations to depend on for assistance were half starving. But they still remained within their convents, and sad must have been the feelings of the wretched nuns to find themselves thus reduced to beggary; many who had, perhaps, brought a rich dowry with them. The convents were fast becoming deserted, for the nuns were dying off, and no new ones allowed to enter; now, however, their numbers are increasing rapidly. All who take the veil are obliged to have a fortune of fourteen thousand reals, about one hundred and fifty pounds.

We went to see one take the white veil in the convent of Santa Paula, which was formerly very wealthy; and where those of noble blood only were received. The portal of the church is pretty and quaint, a sort of Gothic architecture, the whole encircled by a row of azulejos and the "Tanto Monta," the motto of the Catholic sovereigns. The convent church is very handsome within; the grating which divides the portion allotted to the public from that devoted to the nuns faces the high altar. There were but few people present, the novelty of the thing having now subsided. The bride herself was dressed in white, and very badly dressed she was. She entered the convent at once, her friends and relations remaining outside in the church. There was an orchestra which played polkas; and the curtain being lowered before the

reja prevented all view of what was going on in the interior. When the curtain was withdrawn, we saw a dim, mysterious scene behind the reja; the nuns, with their black veils ranged down the sides of the convent chapel, each holding a torch in her hand; the novices, with their white veils, standing in the centre; behind them, a table, on which was placed a small figure of the Saviour as a child, surrounded by flowers and all kinds of ornaments. The lady herself moved about, and came forward several times to the grating with a taper in her hand; the organ played, and the nuns were supposed to be singing, but the music effectually drowned their voices. The curtain fell and rose again, and the second act commenced; the novice appeared in the dress of the order, with an enormous crown of silver tinsel and roses upon her head. She said farewell to her friends, and then the door was shut, and she went round to all the nuns to embrace them.

There is something sad and solemn in that kiss, that welcome as it were to a new life, that breaking of all earthly ties, that complete and entire devotion of the soul to God. It is an impressive sight, and one cannot help meditating whether the principal actor in the scene has really thought seriously over the life on which she is about to enter; and yet no one present seemed to view it in a solemn light. They were laughing and talking, and making various remarks on everything around them; the attention, of the women more particularly, being divided between the dress of the novice and that of the image on the table. However, her noviciate is but commencing, and she has yet time to return to the world, if she finds this life of seclusion disagreeable to her. One young lady, who took the white veil a short time ago, left the convent at the expiration of four days! Nuns, however, seem very happy, and do enjoy a little gossip as much as

any people I ever saw. Their delight when visitors arrive is unbounded, and I believe they know all the scandal of the town better than those who live in it. Their conversation is amusingly simple, and they will dilate for an hour on the dresses they make for their images, and the manner in which they deck out the altar; in fact the whole tone of their behaviour is childish and frivolous. A nun I went to see one day, kept me for an hour expatiating on the beauty of an image of some saint which the sisterhood had purchased at a pawnbroker's shop. They had heard of it, and bought it for forty reals, and then she added: "Now we have put him on a new dress, you can form no idea how nice and pretty he looks!"

TALKING AT THE REJA.

CHAPTER VII.

Magnifico es el Alcazar
Con que se ilustra Sevilla
Deliciosos sus jardines
Su escelsa portada rica.

DUQUE DE RIVAS.

PAINTINGS—CHURCH OF SAN ISIDORO—MUSEO—LA CARIDAD—MURILLO'S HOUSE—DEAN CEPERO—CHURCH OF THE UNIVERSITY—THE ALCAZAR—THE LONJA—PILFERINGS OF ENGLISH TOURISTS—CATHEDRAL LIBRARY—SAN TELMO—LAS DELICIAS—TORRE DEL ORO—TRIANA—GIPSIES—DANCES—PLAZAS—QUEEN'S PICTURE—CASA DE PILATOS—SOCIETY—TALKING AT THE REJA—MARRIAGES—THE THEATRE—CIGAR MANUFACTORY—CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS—THE INFANTA.

THE church of San Isidoro contains a chef-d'œuvre by Roelas, representing the saint dying in the church of San Vicente. It is a splendid composition, but placed

in a light which renders it difficult to appreciate its various beauties. Roelas was one of the first great painters of the Seville school; he was born about 1560, and, like many others who shed a lustre on the arts and literature of Spain, belonged to the Church, and held a prebendal stall in the collegiate church of Olivarez. Most of the best pictures, which were in the convents of Seville, have been collected into that of the Merced, now converted into a museum, whose walls are adorned by some of the choicest creations of Murillo. For some time they found shelter in the cathedral, but in 1480 were removed to the convent, which had been prepared for their reception. Some have been arranged in the old church belonging to the building, but the greater number are placed in some of the rooms on the upper floor. The convent of the Merced was built by St. Ferdinand; it contains two lovely patios, and in the centre of the larger one are some gigantic weeping willows. The hall, to which travellers naturally turn with an impatient step, is that which contains the gems of Murillo's master hand—seventeen in number.

Here the walls glow with the paintings of him who is justly considered the pride of Seville. Here may be seen the varied forms of beauty, in which the great master delighted to portray the Virgin; now we behold her kneeling in meek and humble resignation listening to the joyful intelligence that the angel is conveying to the handmaiden of the Lord; now appearing in turn to some kneeling saint in a glorious halo of life and light as the Queen of Heaven, surrounded by cherubs such as Murillo only could depict. There is the figure of Saint Francis clasping the dying Saviour on the Cross, a masterpiece of drawing; the hand of the Redeemer rests upon the shoulder of the saint, whose eyes are fixed upon the Cross with a look of extatic devotion.

Here hangs Murillo's own favourite canvas, the Santo Tomas de Villanueva; it is indeed a glorious painting—the dignity of the prelate contrasting so forcibly with the squalid poverty of those who are waiting for his gifts; that urchin beggar-boy in front, the good bishop, whose face one cannot look on without love, and the life-like mendicant kneeling at his feet and watching with avidity the opening palm. Then the eye rests upon the soft and vapoury representation of St. Felix of Cantalicio, an exquisite production; and so is St. Anthony kneeling before a rock, on which the Child appears seated on an open book, pointing to the heavenly vision which appears above. The two patron saints of Seville are fine powerful figures, as they ought to be, considering that they hold the Giralda between them, rather an unwieldy burden for the hands of two fair damsels; they bear the palm-branch—the emblem of martyrdom—and the earthenware jars at their feet recal their trade as potters of Triana. Painted indeed with all the energy of life is the small Virgin and Child, better known as the Servilleta, from having been executed on a dinner napkin and presented as a parting gift to the cook of the Capuchin convent. The Child itself is starting out of the canvas, but brilliant as is the colouring of this renowned picture, I think one would not admire it less were it called by any other name. There is not anything heavenly about the expression of the Virgin; on the contrary, all speaks of earth.

There are many other pictures scattered upon the different walls of this convent, but none hardly claiming any notice. Some are most irresistibly ludicrous, representing all the sad temptations to which poor St. Francis and others were exposed during their sojourn in "this world of woe." It would be hard to repress a smile at some of these strange productions, where saints appear persecuted

by his Satanic Majesty in every variety of disguise, not unfrequently selecting that of woman, who "with eyes of most unholy blue," endeavours to distract their attention. The costume too of these extraordinary compositions is not the least amusing part, for these early painters set aside all regard of time, and place, and dress, all being indiscriminately decked out in knightly costumes, and other things equally preposterous; as, for instance, in a picture of the Annunciation, alluded to by Pacheco, in which the Virgin had a rosary and a pair of spectacles hung up against the wall.

In the church, now no longer used, are some two or three fine paintings. One the celebrated Apotheosis of St. Thomas of Aquinas, considered to be the masterpiece of Zurbaran. This painter was born in Estremadura in 1598; he was a pupil of Roelas, and painted the friars of the Carthusian order with as much zest as his master did the disciples of Loyola. As a composition, this picture is not pleasing; it is divided into two portions; above appears the saint, below him are the four doctors of the Latin Church seated upon clouds, while in the lower part of the picture you see Charles V. kneeling before a table surrounded by bishops and courtiers. The transition between the upper and lower portion is harsh. Murillo's aerial tone is wanting here; but the colouring is splendid, and the robes of the Imperial Cæsar are worthy of the Venetian school. There are other paintings by the same master, and a fine Martyrdom of St. Andrew by Roelas. Above the Zurbaran hangs a grand Conception, by Murillo, of colossal size.

There is now a small catalogue sold at the Museum which enlightens the world, at all events, as to the names of the pictures and their authors; and even that piece of information could not be procured a few years ago. There are a few specimens of painted sculpture here;

the St. Jerome of Torrigiano and the St. Dominick of Montañes, the former in terra-cotta, the latter in wood. Torrigiano was the same who executed the sepulchre of our Henry VII. in Westminster Abbey. He died in the dungeons of the Inquisition at Seville, where he was thrown on account of having excited the anger of one of the nobles of that city. Montañes was a native of Alcalá; he was born towards the close of the sixteenth century. Many proofs of his extraordinary talent as a sculptor are to be seen at Seville. One of his most famous productions was Christ Bearing the Cross, which he admired so much himself, that he always stood at the corner of the street to see it pass when it was taken out in procession. It belonged formerly to this convent; now it adorns the church of San Miguel. Some fine carved seats, which were in the choir of the Carthusian convent, are also placed here. The Museum is only open to the public on Sundays and fête days, but travellers can always obtain admission by applying for a ticket.

In the hospital of the Caridad some few of Murillo's chef-d'œuvres are still preserved. This is an establishment for bed-ridden people, founded in the seventeenth century by a devout and pious knight of Calatrava, named Manara. He lies buried in a vault within, and in compliance with his wish, there is an inscription placed on a slab at the church door, recording that "there lie the bones and ashes of the worst man that ever lived." The pretty chapel was decorated with many gems of Murillo's, and although some of them were carried off to adorn the walls of Soult's mansion in Paris, a few still remain; the two most famous being Moses striking the Rock, and the Miracle of the loaves and fishes. In the latter the figure of the Saviour is not sufficiently prominent. Nothing can be more majestic than

the figure of Moses; and the whole composition is beautiful.

One cannot help being struck by the singular resemblance borne by the rock to the one still pointed out to travellers by the monks of Sinai as the scene of the miracle. These pictures, however, are seen to great disadvantage, hung, as they are, so far from the eye, and not by any means as bright in colouring as those of Murillo in general. The large one of San Juan de Dios is a powerful painting; the dark figure of the saint, and the sick man he is carrying along with difficulty, appear in shadow, while all the light is concentrated on the angel, who comes to assist him. This institution is admirably conducted, and the patients are attended by Sisters of Charity. One day, when we were lingering in the church, the sisters were all at their devotions. There was something so quiet and so holy about the scene, in that temple erected by the hand of charity, adorned with the triumph of art, to see those pious women kneeling before the altar of Him to whose service they had devoted their lives. The Sisterhood of Charity is certainly one of the most admirable institutions in the world; and long may it find devotees to fill its ranks, and long may they continue to do the good works for which St. Vincent de Paul established their order.

There is yet one place of pilgrimage to be visited in Seville, the house where Murillo died, now inhabited by the Dean, Don Manuel Cepero, a man who has endeavoured to preserve the remains of ancient art which still grace the city of Seville. In fact almost all that has been done of late years owes its existence to him; he preserved the Murillos from ruin by giving them shelter in the cathedral; and he caused the church belonging to the University, formerly the Jesuit College, to be arranged for the reception of some of the tombs which were about to

share the fate of the convent in which they had been erected. The church of the University is a fine temple, something in the grand and classic style of Herrera, to whom it has been attributed; but it is more generally supposed to have been erected by a Jesuit, Bustamante, who flourished in the sixteenth century. When the followers of Ignatius were banished from Spain by Charles III. in 1767, the building was given over to the University; the best pictures were taken from the church, and conveyed to the Alcazar, and it remained neglected until the Dean thought of turning it to account as a museum of art. The churregueresque retablos which adorned its walls were taken down and replaced by fine monuments from the Cartuja and other monastic edifices; and here are many sepulchres of the family of Ribera, Marquises of Tarifa, who are now represented by the house of Medina Celi. Here, too, may be seen the tomb of the great Marquis Duke of Cadiz, who had been interred in the Augustine convent in this city. The name of Ponce de Leon recals many a passage in the conquest of Granada; an inscription records the date of his death, and the transfer of his remains to this church at the expense of the present Duke of Osuna, in whom the title of Duke of Arcos has merged. This church possesses a fine retablo by Roelas, representing a Holy Family with St. Ignatius Martyr and St. Ignatius Loyola, the patrons of the order. An Annunciation, by Pacheco, is above it. There is also in the church a pulpit in wood, most beautifully carved.

The taste for the fine arts, which prompted the Dean to restore the church of the University, has led him to take great pride in the house where he resides, and where it is believed Murillo died. It is close to the city wall; and over the cancela, which leads into a pretty patio, is placed a portrait of Murillo, with a statement that in that

house he died. Nothing can exceed the kindness and affability with which the Dean escorts travellers over his house, which he has filled with pictures, some possessing considerable merit, although, perhaps, of doubtful authenticity. Murillo was born in Seville in 1617; he soon showed a fondness for drawing, and studied under Castillo. He used to paint pictures for sale at the weekly fair, which still takes place every Thursday near the old Alameda, and where every variety of old things is to be disposed of amid crowds of urchins, the very originals of Murillo's beggar boys.

Determined to improve himself by travelling, and seeing the works of foreign artists, he started for Madrid, where he soon advanced under the protection of his great countryman, Velasquez, who, like himself, was a native of Seville. But he soon returned to his native town, and commenced his career of glory by painting the well-known pictures in the Franciscan convent. His fame was now established, and in course of time he made a great step towards the promotion of art by founding an academy for painting in Seville, of which he was the first president. He died in 1682, after a long life passed in the pursuit of his art.

The mantle of Murillo has not, however, fallen on the modern school of Seville; her painters in the present day are not distinguished for talent. Some of them copy well the productions of their great master, but the taste for art in Spain is not calculated to bring forth and encourage genius. Spain has never produced any great landscape painters. Strange, that here in the south, where earth and sky are so beautiful, men should never have sought to copy the scenes before them; while in northern lands, beneath cloudy skies, the study of landscape painting should have been followed up with such ardour. Spanish art has been more exclusively devoted, than that

of any other country, to religious subjects; and the natural beauties of her land, the glorious buildings which crowd her cities, the picturesque appearance of the inhabitants and their dwellings, have found no one to transfer all their varied features to the canvas. It is indeed true that a devotion to nature seems most innate in the lands where she is less lavish of her gifts. It is, perhaps, that she is so glorious in these southern climes that none can dare to imitate her.

One of the first places, which travellers generally visit after they have seen the cathedral, and the principal paintings in Seville, is the Alcázar or Palace. Originally built by the Moorish conquerors of Seville, it was here that the young Abdelasis, the governor of Andalucia, gave his hand to the widow of Roderick, and expiated with his life the folly of seeking to make himself an independent sovereign. But the present palace has little to do with its original founders. Although of Arabic architecture, it was raised under the superintendence of the Christians, and bears a stamp different from the Alhambra. More massive and solid in its proportions, it cannot boast of the exquisite elegance and miniature beauty of the palace of Granada, and however much it may charm upon a first arrival in Andalucia, it looks coarse and unfinished to any one who is well acquainted with the fairy courts of the Alhambra. The Alcázar was built by Pedro the Cruel, who, passionately fond of everything Moorish, sent for the first architects of Granada to come and adorn the palace in his favourite Seville.

It has been added to by almost every Spanish sovereign, who at some period or another of his life resided here. The patio is very fine, and surrounded by beautiful azulejos. The Hall of the Ambassadors opens out of it, and is the finest room in the Alcázar; the ceiling is magnificent, as fresh as though the gilding had been put

on but yesterday, but it is very much disfigured by a row of portraits of the Spanish kings, which were placed there by Philip II., covering and disfiguring the beautiful arabesque ornaments. There is a pretty patio, called De las Muñecas, which is being completely restored, in fact, made all new; but as in the Alhambra, these repairs go on slowly, and seem as interminable as most Spanish things. Some of the rooms are entirely spoilt by modern restoration, others, by the alterations of former monarchs. On the upper floor there is a charming little chapel of azulejo work, built by Isabella, and from one of the centre rooms, there is a fine view of the Giralda, which makes a perfect picture, seen as if through a frame formed by the lovely horse-shoe arches and delicate pillars supporting them. A fine suite of rooms faces the gardens, but spoiled by fire-places—things which were never dreamt of by Moorish architects. These walls could tell many a tale of horror, for here many of the most cold-blooded murders of Pedro the Cruel were committed, more particularly that of his brother the Master of Santiago, which has been the theme of many a poet.

The gardens of the Alcázar are as splendid as orange-trees and water can make them under such a sun and sky; protected from every breeze, they are broiling in the mid-day heat, when even at Christmas one is glad to seek the refreshing shade of the orange-trees. There is a charming pavilion, all of azulejos, of the time of Charles V., where are seats cool and tempting, and it is a pleasure merely to sit and do nothing in such a climate; a happiness to live and enjoy existence. In winter the orange-trees are laden with their golden fruit, and in spring the air is impregnated with the perfume of their blossoms.

There are, however, but few flowers, the climate of Seville renders it difficult to cultivate them owing to the

intense heat and dryness of the summer months; but still, there is no doubt, if they cared for them and understood their cultivation, they might make a terrestrial Paradise of these gardens, more particularly with the abundance of water which they can command. As it is, they owe their great charm to the orange and lemon trees, the fruit of which is not picked till January. I have seen most lovely flowers here at Christmas, but they were as rare as they were lovely. A high wall, ornamented with rough stone-work, skirts these gardens; there is a walk along the top, and seats at the end, where many a pleasant hour may be spent in the months of April and May, luxuriating in the coolness of the evening air and inhaling the perfume of the snowy blossoms below.

The Alcázar is close to the cathedral; a small but pretty walk, with trees, occupying the space between. Close by stands the Lonja, or Exchange, its grand and simple form pointing at once to Herrera as the architect, the same who raised the massive fabric of the Escorial. The Lonja was built in order to afford some place for merchants to meet and transact business, when the wealth of the New World was flowing into the port of Seville. Not having any specified building, it seems they resorted to the cathedral, where, as an old Spanish author says, they were obliged to go and hear the news, and talk over mercantile affairs, "de manera que para lo de Dios y para lo del mundo, parece que es un hombre obligado á venir á esta Iglesia una vez al dia."* The worthy archbishop took up the matter very seriously, and persuaded Philip II. to put an end to such scandal. The merchants were accordingly desired to raise a building, and the design was entrusted to Juan de Herrera; it was completed in 1598.

* "So that for the things of God, and for those of the world, it seems that a man is obliged to come to this cathedral once a day."

The Lonja, as it now stands, is an emblem of the actual condition of Spain; its halls deserted, not a sign of life about it. It has a very fine patio, paved with marble. A polished marble staircase leads to a superb gallery, running round three sides of the building, full of the records of Spain's past greatness. Here are ranged on shelves, the archives of the New World from the time of its discovery. But the gallery is deserted, the blue and brown paper parcels, ticketed and numbered, look cold and voiceless, and no one seems to think of studying their records. There are some curious documents relating to Cervantes, and his application to the government for some situation in America, which was refused him. They set forth all the sufferings of his life, his wars and captivity in Algiers; but a deaf ear was turned to his petition, and he remained in Spain, to write Don Quixote, and immortalize his name. Many of these interesting manuscripts used formerly to be shown to strangers, but the glass-cases which enclose them will not open any more, thanks to the exploits of one of our own countrywomen, who managed one day to abstract a page from this valuable collection as a gentle souvenir of Cervantes.

It is impossible to find words sufficiently strong to reprehend such conduct as this—conduct in which our own countrypeople are very fond of indulging. It makes one blush to hear, when abroad, that such a thing is no longer exhibited, because some English persons carried off a piece of it. Although we may find fault with Spaniards for not prizing their relics of antiquity sufficiently, we carry reverence for them to a dangerous pitch. It is in fact a perfect mania with John Bull, who never seems to value anything unless he can obtain some of it. The greater the quantity of stolen goods produced on a return from the Continent, the greater the satisfaction.

The act of looking at things seems to afford but little pleasure, unless some portion can be carried away as a souvenir. Nothing is safe from the hands of some travellers. They will stop at no petty pilfering, in order to display a motley catalogue of things, comprising perhaps a corner of an Egyptian hieroglyphic, a finger of some Grecian statue, mosaics from the dome of St. Peter's, an arabesque from the Alhambra, a piece of silk cut off some historic banner, a leaf from an illuminated manuscript, or even a piece of the curtains which draperied the couch of some great man.

The collection of manuscripts in the Lonja is very interesting from its connection with the New World; but the library bequeathed to the cathedral by Ferdinand Columbus brings the discoverer yet more forcibly to mind. Here are preserved some books said to have belonged to Columbus himself, with many marginal notes in his own handwriting. There are several editions of valuable works, and some beautifully illuminated Bibles and Missals: any one who wishes may obtain permission to go and read in this library. Above the book-cases, the walls are lined with likenesses of distinguished Sevillanos, and others who have figured in Spanish history. At one end is a picture of St. Ferdinand by Murillo, and at the other a large painting of Christopher Columbus, by a modern French artist, presented to the Dean and Chapter by Louis Philippe. Amongst the more modern appears a portrait of Cardinal Wiseman, of whom the Sevillanos are very proud, from his being a native of their town.

The most notable object in the library is, perhaps, the sword of Fernan Gonzalez, which, according to some verses inscribed, seems to have been brought to Seville by Garcia Perez de Vargas. How it came here does not appear to be known exactly, unless, as its old guardian

suggests, it was buried with Garcia Perez, and dug up when the old mosque was destroyed to make way for the present cathedral.

The Columbina, as this library is called, is placed in a long gallery leading from the Orange Court, to the left, as you enter by the Puerta del Perdon. Nearly opposite is the Archbishop's Palace, a building erected in the beginning of the last century, without anything to recommend it. Soult resided in it during his stay in Seville. The staircase, they say, was commenced on a scale of great magnificence by the then archbishop, who spent money upon it which was intended for charitable purposes. A jester, however, caused him to suspend his work by reproaching him with a bitter speech: "Stones were once turned into bread to feed the poor, but your grace is doing something more wonderful, for you are turning bread into stone."

From the Lonja it is not far to the Paseo. You leave the town by the Puerta de Jeres, on which an inscription sums up the history of Seville, in a few words, from Hercules to the sainted monarch. The huge fabric of the tobacco manufactory rises to the left, while in front a broad walk leads past a tasteless palace, formerly the naval college of San Telmo, now the residence of the Infanta Luisa Fernanda. The Duke and Duchess of Montpensier have taken up their residence in Seville, and the Infanta keeps up almost regal state. They live very quietly and retired; seldom receiving at the palace, their entertainments extending at the most to one or two formal concerts during the winter season. The Duke passes his time looking after his property and superintending the improvements going on in the palace and its grounds. The Infanta is very amiable and charitable, but reserved and fond of etiquette. She is quite the Queen at Seville, and her sister could not be

treated with more state than she is, when she attends any ceremony that may happen to be going on at the cathedral, or elsewhere.

The building where they now reside was erected towards the latter end of the seventeenth century, and its façade is a very characteristic specimen of the decline of Spanish taste in architecture, being what is commonly called Churrigueresque, from Churriguera. The portal is an extravaganza of bad taste, and the whole building has been rendered still more hideous by the bright-red colour with which it is now painted, the Doric pilasters standing out in white contrast; the whole is enclosed by iron rails, richly gilt in French style. The naval students have been expelled, and the palace is now magnificently furnished, although it displays more richness than good taste; the rooms are too overloaded with ornament, and very heavy. The situation is charming, close to the edge of the Guadalquivir, and facing the public promenade. The gardens cover a large extent of ground; they are planted with orange-trees, and radiant with tropical flowers. Great expense has been incurred in making artificial mounds, lakes, summer-houses, aviaries, grottos, and rustic temples. The gardens are only now being laid out, so, as yet, they can scarcely be seen to advantage.

The Duke enclosed a good deal of ground along the paseo, but the Ayuntamiento would not allow of his walling it, on account of disfiguring the public walk. It is accordingly surrounded by iron railings, supported by large whitewashed piers. The walk is charming, and deserves its name of Las Delicias, with the gardens of San Telmo on one side, and the river flowing on the other; one or two graceful palms on the opposite bank giving an Eastern colouring to the landscape. Part of it is planted with oranges and lemons. It is the fashionable

resort in winter; here people come to take the sun, "tomar el sol," as the Spaniards say; here its effects are felt with much force, and even in winter it is sometimes disagreeably hot in the middle of the day. On the promenade the beau-monde of Seville exhibit their bright-coloured dresses; and here, and at the theatre, are the only two places where a stranger has any opportunity of seeing the Sevillanos. Fans are rapidly giving way to parasols, but bonnets do not seem to be coming into fashion as rapidly here as at Madrid and elsewhere: they are still few enough to attract attention, and contribute to set off the beauty of the mantilla by the contrast.

Sometimes, on Sundays and on fête days, a military band plays, and a greater crowd than usual assembles. Strangers are always struck with the very dressy appearance of the promenaders, they wear such showy pink and blue silk dresses, while the gay ribbons in the hair, and the black lace veil thrown over the head, make them appear as though they were ready for some full-dress party. Still those who adhere to the old costume, and dress in black, appear to much greater advantage, the sombre hue suiting best with the mantilla. The Sevillanos must, however, be excused for their gay toilettes of a morning, for as there is not any society here, it is the only opportunity they have of indulging in a display of dress. Brilliant colours, too, harmonise better with the intense sunlight and clearness of the atmosphere, than they would under our own dull, cloudy sky.

Not the least characteristic portion of the scene are the refresco-stands, or painted wooden sheds, which are dotted along the banks of the river, where water is vended, and milk of almonds, and various kinds of refreshing beverages. These stands are to be seen every-

where in Seville, at the corners of the streets, in the plazas, and wherever people most do congregate. They were generally painted green, and often very tastefully and showily decorated. Large jars of water are placed behind, and in front vases filled with gold and silver fish, interspersed with piles of oranges, and bunches of roses and other flowers.

The most conspicuous object on the river-side is the Torre del Oro, a large tower, whose origin is lost in obscurity, everybody entertaining their own opinion about it, and the honour of having erected it has been attributed both to Romans and Mahometans. Its name is singular, deriving its origin, some say, from having been the place where Pedro the Cruel preserved his treasures. It was formerly connected with the Alcázar, but those walls have long since been pulled down, and it now stands quite isolated on the shores of the Guadalquivir.

But the great pride of the Sevillanos is the new iron bridge, which connects it with Triana, and has replaced the old bridge of boats, which since the days of the Romans afforded the only means of communication. It was completed last year under a French engineer, and is rather a handsome structure; the worthy people here think it very odd that travellers should have such bad taste as not to select it for sketching, instead of all those odd old things in the streets, which they are so fond of—it is so much prettier.

Triana is a large suburb on the opposite bank of the river, with some good houses in it; but a great proportion is inhabited by gipsies, to the number of two or three thousand, who have here their head-quarters. Some of the old half-ruined places in which they live, are most delightfully picturesque, at least, if an unlimited amount of dirt and tumble-down walls can entitle a thing to that appellation. But they are, in truth, very bits for a painter,

with the vines climbing about them; and the dark sons and daughters of the East huddled together in wild-looking groups, sitting about in the courts. The men, with their thin long hair, dark brown complexion, snowy teeth, and thick lips, proclaiming at once their Oriental origin. The wild melancholy look of the women, with their jet-black eyes, their coarse raven hair carelessly tied up behind, decked with the brightest flowers and any tawdry jewelled combs or pins that can be scraped together, the "abandon" of their figures—all speaking of the East. The coarse finery with which they love to clothe themselves, the common cotton dresses with deep full flounces, the china crape shawl thrown over their shoulders, always of the gaudiest hue, contrast with their olive-coloured skins, which sun and dirt both assist in darkening. They are a strange, mysterious race. Although settled down here in towns, and obliged, outwardly at least, to conform to the dominant religion of the land, they bear unchanged their own distinctive characteristics, and stand as much apart from Spaniards as though they belonged to another country.

Taught from their earliest infancy to steal and cheat, they indulge in every sort of petty theft during the remainder of their lives, the only disgrace attendant upon the deed being its discovery. They will beg from and humbug you with the most overpowering speeches; but while they are praising you, they may only be awaiting their opportunity to filch, and for this their extraordinary cunning adapts them admirably. They never rob by violence; they only take their neighbours' goods by stealth, quietly and furtively. And yet, in their own domestic relations, they have virtues which might adorn a higher station; the devotion of the women to their husbands and children is unbounded, and many a tale is told of the manner in which they show their attachment.

When their husbands are in prison, which often happens, the sacrifices they make, the hardships they endure, to soften their lot, or shorten, if possible, their captivity, are indeed surprising. Many of their customs are very peculiar, and they still endeavour to persuade people to believe in witchcraft, and the working of charms, &c. Their funerals, more particularly those of the children, are attended with all sorts of rejoicings, the night being spent in dancing and music.

Their most striking characteristics may be seen in their dances, and a curious scene they present, wild and almost uncivilized. Their movements carry one at once to Eastern lands. The contortions of the figure—for they dance more with the body than the feet—the manner in which the spectators beat time with their hands, while others sing, or rather screech, until they work themselves up to a state of frenzy, and the dancers become more and more animated, and all assumes a character of almost savage excitement. Every movement has a meaning, every gesture an expression, each flash of their fire-glancing eyes conveys more than words could tell. The dances themselves are coarse and disagreeable, but the whole presents a rich study for an artist —the varying expressions in the countenances of the surrounding groups; the young girls with their glancing eyes; the old women with their wizened, wrinkled countenances, indicative only of low and vicious cunning. Then comes the "vito," the most animated dance of all; this is performed by a woman alone. She ties a handkerchief across her shoulder like a scarf, puts a sombrero on her head, which only adds to the saucy look they all have, and commences the usual evolutions. The spectators keep time by clapping their hands, an accompaniment which in gipsy dances replaces the castanets; the tambourine and the guitar are also called

into requisition, and the song commences, which always accompanies this dance.

Las mozitas son de oro;
Las casadas son de plata;
Las viudas son de cobre;
Las viejas de hojalata,
Por el Vito—el Vito el Vito,
Por el Vito, &c., &c.

The dance concludes by her fixing on some one of the party, before whom she dances, and on whom the flashing glance of her eye is cast, when she throws him the handkerchief, and waits for it to be returned with a bright peseta in the corner. Those who cannot see these dances by wandering so far to the South, may see them this year on the walls of the Academy; for they have been depicted to the life by a Mr. Phillip, the artist, who spent some time in Seville, and to whom we owe the opportunities we had of seeing something of this strange race.

In Triana there are two or three churches, one dedicated very strangely to La Virgen de la O., the origin of which singular name I have never been able to discover: she is rather a favourite patroness, however, in Triana, and many a young lady has the odd-sounding name given her, of Maria de la O. One church in Triana has undergone a sad metamorphosis; it is now converted into a theatre, one of the lowest in Seville; and the actual stone of the high altar still remains behind the scenes.

Although the Alameda is thronged with fashionables in winter, on the summer nights the gay world generally flock to the Plaza del Duque, a small square in the centre of the town, planted with trees. The casino or club is on one side of it, and in this neighbourhood are some of the most fashionable streets of Seville, such as the Calle de las Armas, San Vicente, &c. Another very pretty

little square is the Plaza Magdalena, which has likewise its acacia-trees, and fountain, and marble benches, and stands of aguadores who sell refreshing beverages. The Fonda de Madrid is in this square, certainly the best hotel in Seville, but the most expensive.

The largest square in the town is, of course, now called the Plaza de la Constitucion. It has a very fine specimen of plataresque work in the Casas Capitulares, a striking building, which was very nearly being sacrificed a few months ago. The Ayuntamiento wished to pull it down, in order to make a fine Paris-looking square, but they were fortunately prevented, and have now commenced building a new plaza at the back of it, on the site of the old Franciscan convent. It promises to be as ugly as might be expected from the taste of Spanish corporations in these days. On the Queen's birth-day and fête-day, her picture, and that of the King, are hung up, in front of the Casas Capitulares, sentries are placed on each side, and a military band serenades the pictures in the evening, treating them as though their majesties were really present—a curious custom, and one universally practised both in the churches and theatres on the occasion of any great "funcion" when the Queen is more especially concerned. Her picture figures in the state-box instead of herself, and receives the same honours which would be paid to her. In Madrid, during all the great services in the churches when Te Deums were sung in gratitude for her deliverance from the hand of the assassin at the time of Merino's attempt upon her life, her picture was put up in the open space before the high altar, with guards round it.

Some of the houses in the Plaza are very picturesque, with a covered arcade beneath, and the view of the Giralda from this point is beautiful, more particularly at sunset, when it assumes that pinky hue which glows on

it like fire. Near this plaza is the street of the silversmiths, where they sell all those pretty little silver and gold buttons which ornament the jackets of the Andalucian majo; they are, however, coarsely worked. Rosaries are also here, and a variety of ornaments in silver filagree, but very inferior to the productions of Malta and Genoa. The custom of having separate streets for particular trades prevails still in Seville, but it is fast disappearing, and a showy shop, full of electroplate, has made its appearance in the Calle de Genova, intruding on a domain formerly pertaining exclusively to the booksellers. Most of the shops of Seville are quite open to the street; no glass, but supported almost invariably by one of those slender marble pillars which abound in this city of diminutive columns.

There are several old houses in Seville, which, although not exactly of Moorish origin, bear traces of having been erected in imitation of the Arab style of architecture. One still exists in the best preservation, and is commonly known by the name of the Casa de Pilatos, and belongs to the ducal house of Medina Celi. It is said to have been built in imitation of Pilate's house at Jerusalem by one of the Riberas, who performed a pilgrimage there in 1519. Be this as it may, the house, although erected at the commencement of the 16th century, is a copy of the Alcázar, and some of its ceilings and rooms are very fine. Its staircase is beautiful, and quite unique in its style, the walls being covered with the most beautiful azulejos. The Duke of Alva's house bears traces likewise of Moorish architecture, but it is so very much decayed, that it has but little left to tell of its former magnificence. Both these houses are neglected by their owners, who, living in Madrid, may be said to have abandoned them completely. Some of the churches likewise retain their Moorish towers, and those of San Marco and Santa

Catalina are picturesque enough. In the interior they possess but little interest. They are neither remarkable for their architectural merits nor for any objects of art they contain; there are but few good pictures now to be found in them, and the pasos, the wooden images, are perhaps their greatest attraction.

In Seville there is even less society than in other Andalucian towns. There are not any balls or parties whatever, and people seldom meet except at the theatre or on the promenades. Each family has its own little circle, consisting of two or three relatives or friends, who come and sit together of an evening, or else they have a box at the theatre, and go there night after night. This is all very well for the inhabitants themselves who have their own relatives and friends; but for foreigners it is anything but lively: and the more to be regretted at Seville, where there are all the elements necessary for agreeable society. There are a great many families of the nobility residing here; they have charming houses, admirably calculated for receiving, and there is not by any means a deficiency of wealth. But they do not care about it; they are unused to it; it requires too much exertion, and they prefer going on with the same routine. Some will tell you it is a spirit of emulation existing about dress which prevents balls and parties being given: each strives to outvie the other in the splendour of her toilette, and as all cannot afford to be equally extravagant, they gradually give up appearing at any parties, which some more enterprising than the rest may have endeavoured to give, and at length the rooms remain deserted.

This is one of the many reasons the Sevillanos themselves give, and although it may sound rather absurd, I believe it is not very far from the truth. They meet at the theatre, see each other at the paseo, and the young ladies, when they are engaged to be married, find it

more agreeable to talk to their lovers at the reja, than excite their jealousy by accepting the attentions of others in a crowded ball-room. As young people, under such circumstances, are not generally allowed to be together without the presence of some third person, which we must presume to be very disagreeable, the lady stations herself at the window on the ground-floor, and there, with the jealous reja between her and her lover, she can discourse at her leisure, while he stands in the street, enveloped in his cloak. And there they converse by the hour, and whisper so low, that not even the passers-by can catch the echo of their voice.

"Comme on doit avoir froid," said a Frenchman to me one night returning from the theatre, as we passed a hero who was always at his post, even during the comparative cold of Christmas. But the Spaniard did not feel cold, the genial climate of Seville makes it less of a penance standing in the street, than it would be either in France or England. They certainly do exhibit the most wonderful patience in remaining there for hours, night after night, and that for a length of time which would quite exhaust the patience of a less Oriental race.

Children in this country are much more independent of their parents than with us. The father is obliged to give his eldest son a certain portion of his fortune when he marries, even should he do so without his consent. A grandee must obtain that of the Sovereign, but young people, whose parents object to their marriage, have only to apply to the civil authorities and state their grievance. If no rational objections can be urged, the alcalde takes the young lady or gentleman, as the case may be, from the parents' house, and deposits them, as they term it, under the roof of some relative or friend, where they remain until the marriage takes place, the parents not having it in their power to prevent the ceremony being

performed. A woman in Spain retains her own fortune when she marries, and is in every point, as far as regards money, far more independent than a married woman in England. The husband, be he ever so extravagant, can never touch his wife's property; and it is very amusing to hear Spaniards discussing this subject, for they entertain an idea that women in England are mere cyphers in their own homes, and they never omit an opportunity of impressing us with the fact, that they are quite independent, and really manage their households themselves, and everything connected with them.

As there is not any society in Seville, a foreigner's acquaintance with Spaniards is pretty nearly confined to morning visits, for few become sufficiently intimate to join the select circle assembled round the brasero in the winter evenings, or in summer amid the flowers of the patio. The ladies do not spend much money on their dress—at least all they do is reserved for the paseo. In their own domestic circle they never seem to mind what they wear; at home, the commonest gown will do, for its defects are concealed by an enormous shawl, in which they muffle themselves up, with their hands tucked under it in the most comfortable manner possible.

The theatre here is not worthy of so large a town, and the performers are generally very indifferent. The lower tier of boxes is the most fashionable, and has a peculiar appearance, having only an iron railing in front. In winter there are both an opera and a dramatic company. Like most provincial towns they cannot afford to pay for first-rate singers, and have to put up with those who are about to make their début upon the stage, or whose career is drawing to a close. There is not much real taste for music in Spain, and singers and musicians do not find it a very profitable country to honour with their presence. It is hardly possible to get

up a concert, for no one will take tickets; they are far more amused at the theatre, where the prices are low and there is more to see.

The dramatic company is tolerable; they very often give the regular Andalucian pieces, particularly on fête days, and on those occasions when the lower orders predominate. They are still very fond of pieces in which the virtues of bandits shine forth, and in which such characters are invested with a heroism and a charm which tend to increase the admiration of the people for those who follow a profession where the rich are robbed only to benefit the poor, and the passers-by are deprived of their purses to pay for masses for the souls of the deceased companions of the spoilers. Some of their farces are very amusing, but the drama is heavy, so full of such long speeches, with scarcely any action or change of scenery. Of tragedy there is, strictly speaking, very little to be seen. Spaniards do not go to the play to be made wretched and miserable by having their feelings worked upon. They go to laugh and pass a pleasant evening, and not to cry; consequently plays founded even on well-known tragical incidents, have the plot tortured in all variety of ways to prevent a melancholy ending, and bring health and happiness to everybody concerned.

An incident à-propos to this appeared in one of the papers, illustrative of the tender-heartedness of the inhabitants of Murcia. After the first representation of "Marino Faliero," the finale disgusted the public to such a degree, that before the second performance the following announcement appeared in the play-bills. "Notice is given that to-night the people will triumph, and that the Council of Ten will succumb." But this was outdone by the effect which "Adrienne Lecouvreur" produced. It hurt the feelings of the

Murcians so much that the manager issued a decree to the following effect. "Having observed that the public, who take such an interest in Adrienne, were profoundly hurt by the tragical death of the heroine, the manager has taken the advice of competent persons, and has arranged that in future it shall end happily, with the marriage of Adrienne to Maurice of Saxony. If this slight variation should meet with the approval of the enlightened public of Murcia, the efforts made to gratify them will be amply rewarded. The performances will terminate as usual with the national dances."

The Spanish paper which records this interesting episode in the history of the drama exclaimed, "What more tragical end could befal a dramatist than to have his works represented on the Murcian stage?" The Sevillanos are not quite so tender-hearted; they will allow translations to terminate as in the original, but certainly in genuine Spanish plays you hardly ever find any one who dies or is murdered on the stage. On Sundays and fête days they give two performances, one at four, which is chiefly attended by the lower orders, and another at eight, devoted to the more aristocratic portion of the community. They generally give one or two of the national dances, either as a wind-up or between the acts. There are some very tolerable dancers at Seville; one of the best has been already alluded to as living in the Giralda, from which she derives her designation of "La Campanera."

The lower orders are a happy, joyous set of people, abounding in all that wit and repartee for which the Andalucians are so celebrated. They are rather too prone to quarrelling, and are constantly falling victims to their impetuosity, and frequent use of the narvaja, which is drawn on the slightest provocation. One day when we were passing by the gate of Triana, a crowd was assembled

round a man who had just been stabbed. Some one had dropped a piece of two cuarts—less than a penny—and four or five began scrambling for it; but in the course of the struggle one offended another, the knife was out, and the discussion was soon put an end to. The Andalucians are, however, considered more given to fair play than the inhabitants of the other provinces; the Valencians, generally stab behind the back, but here at least they mostly use it face to face.

Proud and indolent, they are averse to exertion, and are quite willing to sit quietly enjoying themselves, while the inhabitants of Galicia and the Asturias perform the work, and earn the wages. But with all their faults, there is a something about the Andalucians one cannot help liking; there is so much that is amusing, so much natural wit, with a certain sort of poetry attached to it—what they call the "sal de Andalucia," which there is no translating, or explaining in any other language but their own. They are boasters to a degree, and indulge in exaggerations which have become proverbial. They love to sit in the sun with a cigar in their mouths, that indispensable addition to every Spaniard's comfort. A cigar whiles away the time, makes the hours glide smoothly along, and is the faithful companion of all classes: at the "table-d'hôte," in the diligence, on the promenade, and amid the family circle, he is never without his best friend. It is one of the first things to which ladies must make up their minds to resign themselves, when they undertake to travel in Spain; it is so much a matter of course, that few Spaniards think it necessary even to apologise for smoking in a lady's presence.

A supply of cigars will smoothe every difficulty in travelling, and one offered at the right time will find its way to the most obdurate heart. The government take, however, most unfair advantage of this ruling passion, and

content themselves with the reflection, that there is not any tax paid so willingly as that upon tobacco, for it falls entirely upon the gratification of a mere fancy. It, doubtless, is an article in the revenue not lightly to be cast aside, or not to be remitted without the certainty of being able to find some advantageous substitute. The Spanish government frankly own in the last annual statement of the revenue, that government monopolies have many inconveniences, still it would not be prudent to give up an item which produces two millions of pounds sterling a-year. They therefore maintain, with the most jealous watchfulness, a monopoly, which enables them to sell the most inferior article at whatever price they please. People complain that the cigars get worse every year—but "no hay remedio;" Spaniards have but one alternative—to smoke what are sold to them, or give them up altogether. They do the former, and revenge themselves by saying and writing all sorts of bitter things against the government; for a Spaniard is free to abuse, so long as he will not trouble himself to set about remedying the evils against which he so loudly inveighs.

Tobacco was first brought to Seville about the middle of the sixteenth century from Cuba and St. Domingo, and was made a royal monopoly in 1636. There are two or three large manufactories of cigars in Spain. The one in Seville was built by order of Philip V. expressly for this purpose. Its size is its most remarkable feature, for it cannot boast of any architectural beauty. Here the lovers of smoking may see the various operations of rolling their favourite luxury into the form of cigars. There are upwards of four thousand women employed here, and the huge gallery where they sit presents a curious spectacle. It is supported by thick substantial columns, round which are shelves, on which are placed the small packets as they are completed, while the

women are grouped at low tables, their fingers busily employed in rolling the precious weed into the form of cigars, and their tongues keep up a running accompaniment the whole time. These cigararreras are strictly watched, lest they should endeavour to encourage a little free trade in cigars by abstracting any of the tobacco. Snuff is likewise made here, and the machinery used in the process is of the most antiquated description.

There are a great many charitable institutions in Seville, and most of them are very well managed. A vast improvement has been made in this respect within the last few years. The Foundling Hospital, which used to be a disgrace to Seville, is now a model of neatness and cleanliness. It is under the direction of a junta of ladies, who have confided the charge of it to the Sisters of Charity, under whose superintendence it is most admirably managed. When application for the admission of a child is made during the day-time, one of the Sisters receives the helpless being in silence, no questions being asked : at night, a "torno" receives them. The children remain at the establishment until they are six years old, when they are transferred to the Mendicity Asylum, where they receive the elements of education, and are taught various useful occupations. When we went to see the building, there were but few children in it. We were first conducted into a long room, on each side of which several cradles were placed, all looking as clean and neat as possible, with their snow-white muslin curtains and tidy little quilts ; we were shown one poor child that had been received only that morning, and certainly to look at its little thin pale face, with its large dull eyes, it would appear that it had only been sent there to terminate its short existence upon earth—every feature seemed to bear the impress of death.

We afterwards saw the dormitories of the elder

children, all equally well arranged, with separate rooms for the boys and girls, each bed numbered, and a chair placed at the foot of it. In the "comedor," or dining-room, the table was laid for dinner; and to judge from the account we received of the living, added to the healthy appearance of the children, I should say no possible complaint could be made of the manner in which they are treated. I never saw a merrier, or more noisy set of little creatures than the elder ones, who were running about, enjoying a regular game of romps, little chubby faces and sparkling eyes, which spoke volumes in favour of the care bestowed upon them by the good Sisters of Charity. A great many are put out to nurse, and maintained at the expense of the institution. We were much interested at seeing the stores of clothes of different sizes, all made by the hands of the Sisters, and so beautifully arranged in their various compartments, that it appeared quite a pity to disturb them; in fact, every department is admirably arranged by those sweet recluses, who look the very personification of kindness. How many a sad tale of truth, far stranger than fiction, could be told of many of the deserted little inmates of this institution, if the mystery attached to each could be unveiled! Abandoned by their parents, they grow up without any ties to bind them to the world, no beings to care for, or to love them; their very existence appears almost a misfortune.

The Infanta has established a charitable association here amongst the ladies, which is entirely under their superintendence. Every member subscribes a peseta (about one shilling) per month, and between the large amount of subscriptions and donations from different quarters they continue to collect between two and three thousand pounds a-year. The Infanta herself is chief president, and each parish in Seville has likewise a president, vice-president, secretary, &c. On the 1st of

January they have a grand meeting of all the subscribers, at which the Infanta presides, when the presidents are re-elected or new ones chosen in their stead; the statements made of the general finances and other details connected with the society are also discussed. I attended the meeting this year as a member. The Infanta opened the proceedings with a speech, which she delivered very gracefully. She has rather a rough voice—unfortunately, not an unusual thing in Spain—but her manner possesses much dignity, and the expression of her countenance is very sweet. Business was transacted quite in an official manner; but the ladies seemed to be in dire confusion about giving their votes; however, all the proceedings were at length most satisfactorily terminated, and the whole party sat down to luncheon, when the Duke joined the company. Some say this society does a great deal of good, while others whisper that the claims of poverty have considerably increased since it was founded, from the very indiscriminate manner in which the ladies administer the funds entrusted to their charge. Be this true or not, it is a step in the right direction, giving the ladies, at all events, some useful occupation, and making them interest themselves about the poor. The Infanta sets them a good example; nothing can exceed her kindness and charity, and no appeal to her on behalf of a poor or distressed person is ever made in vain.

PROCESSION IN CHURCH.

CHAPTER VIII.

And slow up the dim aisle afar,
With sable cowl and scapular,
And snow-white stoles, in order due,
The holy fathers, two and two,
In long procession came;
Taper, and host, and book they bare,
And holy banners flourished fair
With the Redeemer's name.

SCOTT.

THE HOLY WEEK—COFRADIAS—IMAGES—PROCESSIONS—THE MONUMENTO—THE FAIR—MAJAS—BUNUELOS—FOREIGNERS—BULL-FIGHTS—RACES—ENVIRONS—ST. JUAN DE ALFARACHE—ITALICA—SANTI PONCE—CARTUJA—ALCALA DE GUADAIRA—SEVILLE AS A RESIDENCE—CLIMATE—DEPARTURE—THE RIVER—SAN LUCAR—CADIZ—CATHEDRAL—CAPUCHIN CONVENT—THE BAY—THE CARACCAS.

It is during the Holy Week that Seville is most

crowded with strangers, who assemble from all quarters to see the processions which form so remarkable a feature in its celebration. Foreigners come from every country, and Spaniards pour in from all parts of the Peninsula, to witness what some Sevillanos, rather irreverently, but not inappropriately, call the "Carneval Divino." This and the fair are the two periods to which the inhabitants look forward as the only seasons when there is any chance of the town having a little more life than usual infused into it.

The services in the cathedral are very fine; and on Holy Thursday, when the monument is lighted up, it certainly presents one of the grandest religious scenes in the world—far finer than anything in Rome, now that the lighting of the Cross in St. Peter's is no longer permitted. The peculiar characteristic of Seville is the number of processions bearing images, representing different scenes in the life of our Saviour and of the Virgin: these processions perform their stations, as they are called, during the Holy Week. The images or "pasos" belong to certain religious associations called Cofradias. Founded in days gone by, when faith prompted people to attend them, and look on them with some feelings of reverential awe; but that spirit has passed away, and now they are chiefly supported by the innkeepers and tradesmen of the town, who contribute largely to their funds, not from any devotional zeal, but as a source of profit, and from the knowledge that they attract a crowd of both natives and foreigners, and thus afford them an opportunity of considerably improving their temporal interests.

The exact date of the foundation of these Cofradias is not known; their origin is involved in obscurity, but they probably took their rise in the fourteenth century. At first they appear to have been simple associations of men

who united for the performance of certain religious duties, visiting the various chapels during the Holy Week in procession, and performing public penance by scourging themselves severely as they walked along, while some of the members carried torches in their hands around the Crucifix. Hence they were called Cofradias de Penitencia, Sangre y Luz. Some assert that San Vicente de Ferrer was one of the first to establish the discipline of penance in the Cofradias when he visited Seville in 1408: others deny they can boast of so remote an antiquity. One thing is certain, that in those early days they did not carry any statues about with them; crucifixes and banners only, on which the incidents of the Passion were represented.

It was not until the beginning of the seventeenth century that images formed a part of the processions; and when once they were introduced, each brotherhood tried to outvie the other in the magnificence of their statues, and the talents of the first sculptors were called into requisition: hence, the vast number of painted images which abound in the churches. In the year 1777, a royal decree prohibited all public penance in the streets; and none but the members who carried torches were allowed to accompany the pasos. Their rules and regulations have been considerably altered during the lapse of years. They have mostly substituted a cross for the banner which used to precede them, and as the real penitents have disappeared, the images are now attended by men dressed in long white or black robes with high-pointed caps, their faces covered, only having holes cut out for their eyes. These men are now called Nazarenos.

During the French invasion, when churches were rifled and despoiled of all their riches, these brotherhoods lost much of their wealth; the sumptuous dresses of the statues were stolen; the costly plate which adorned the

platform on which the figure of the Virgin is carried, was melted down, and it was some years before they even partially recovered from the effects of this wholesale spoliation. The subsequent civil wars, which desolated the Peninsula, prevented for a time the restoration of the Cofradias, but of late years they have resumed their processions. The Infanta and her husband belong to several; and the evident benefit conferred upon the town by so great an attraction to foreigners, induces the members to honour their pasos with all the magnificence possible. Some twelve or fourteen go out now every Holy Week, each having their appointed day and hour.

Besides these stations, they celebrate an annual commemoration with great ceremony before Easter. On these occasions the Host is manifested, and the pasos belonging to the Cofradia, whose festival is being celebrated, are arranged before the altar amid a brilliant display of lights. The prayers are followed by a sermon, and the preachers are always selected from among the most talented and eloquent in Seville. Those Cofradias, also, whose members have sworn to defend the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception attend a grand High Mass, and solemnly renew their vows. After a sermon has been preached appropriate to the occasion, one of the brotherhood ascends the pulpit, and reads the oath taken to defend the belief that the Virgin was free from the taint of original sin, even to the shedding of their blood. The officiating clergyman then receives the vow of each member in succession; and after this ceremony is concluded, the mass proceeds.

Before any of these great "funciones"—"funcion" is a word applied to every great ceremony in Spain, be it in the church, the theatre, or the bull-ring—the images of the Virgin and the saints are generally dressed with care

in splendidly embroidered robes. When a new dress is presented by some pious devotee, great is the commotion excited among the ladies who perform the office of Camarera Mayor, Mistress of the Robes. Sometimes they go to the church, at other times the figure is taken to their own houses, in order that it may be arranged more leisurely. Then the ladies of the family are busily engaged embroidering, and making the more simple and unpretending articles of the toilette, for these images have not only the exterior garments, but also those which are concealed from the vulgar eye. The figure is dressed, and sent back to the church, whence it issues forth to excite unbounded admiration. This occupation, however, is generally regarded as one more especially adapted to ladies of a certain age than to the more juvenile members of society, and "buena para vestir imágenes" (only fit to dress images), has become a phrase applied in Spain to a most respectable class of persons, known in England by the name of old maids.

To return to the Holy Week. A short time before it arrives printed papers are distributed, announcing the various processions which are to go to the cathedral, with the day and hour. Some go out at break of day, others towards evening; and as they are usually behind time, many do not reach it until long after dark. When seen at night, the effect of the whole is considerably heightened, the lights appearing to much greater advantage, and the disagreeable details being partially concealed. The grandest of all is the Santo Entierro, which only goes out once in every three years; but the procession shown in the accompanying sketch is the one which leaves the church of the San Miguel, and bears the beautiful crucifix of Montañes, called the Amor de Cristo.

First come the Nazarenos in their strange dresses; then the paso representing the entrance of our Saviour

into Jerusalem. This consists of a large group of several figures: the Saviour followed by three of the Apostles, while some Hebrews throw their garments at his feet, and the whole is overshadowed by the feathering branches of a lofty palm. These figures are all grouped together upon a platform, carried by a number of men, to whom, indeed, it must be a real penance, transporting such a weight through the streets. This paso is followed by other Nazarenos; then comes the crucifix by Montañes, one of those triumphs of painted wooden sculpture, which makes one indeed experience a feeling of religious awe as this life-like representation of the Redeemer's sufferings, is borne aloft. But the object which alone could inspire sentiments of devotion passes — passes unheeded and unnoticed by the crowd, although it is that before which one would most willingly linger: a blaze of light appears in the distance, military music falls upon the ear, and the anxiety with which all eyes are turned towards the coming paso tells you that the last place, the post of honour in the procession, is reserved for Her who is the object of Seville's most especial veneration, the "Sin Pecado Concebida."

A canopy of purple velvet covers the figure of our Lady de Socorro; she is robed in a richly embroidered dress of black, and surrounded by silver vases filled with flowers, and candelabra blazing with lights. And what effect has all this upon the busy crowd who are passing through the streets? Are these sights suggestive of thoughts befitting the holy time devoted by the Church to the commemoration of our Redeemer's sufferings? Alas! the thronging multitudes are little occupied with such reflections; they are enjoying the Carneval Divino; they are criticising the dresses of the images—discussing their embroidery. "What a lovely pocket-handkerchief the Virgin has to-day!" exclaims one, for Spaniards never

say the Image of the Virgin, or of a Saint, they always speak of them as though they were realities. "What a charming head-dress!" says another; "how very becoming it is!" and a thousand similar remarks are called forth, and form the staple subject of conversation as the different processions pass along The very Nazarenos themselves who accompany the pasos are not much more reverent. They generally carry a small basket filled with bon-bons, which they distribute to their friends as they pass through the streets. Sometimes they lag behind to light a cigar, for which purpose they are obliged to raise their masks.

This is all very sad, but unfortunately too true; and I think any one who has passed a Holy Week in Seville, and who understands the language, will allow that I have not exaggerated. And this is the purity of faith, which her preachers are always boasting she has preserved above all other nations! This is the devotion which now animates the land that produced an Isabella and a Mendoza —a Ximenez and a Talavera!

But we may turn from the scenes enacted in the streets, which must sadden the heart of every right-feeling or religious mind, be they Catholic or Protestant, and enter the glorious temple, where the services of the Holy Week are performed with much solemnity. But even here, many of them are treated as mere spectacles by the congregation, and the fuss and sensation at the rending of the veil show that people have assembled more to see what is going on than to pray. It does not, however, matter much; within this glorious pile there is always some corner to be found apart from the throng.

On Holy Thursday, when the Monumento is lighted up, the Cathedral presents a scene of religious ceremonial, unsurpassed—unequalled. This is a gigantic temple of

painted wood-work, and of Grecian architecture, adorned with statues, prepared for the reception of the Host, which is reserved for the mass on Good Friday. It is erected over the tomb of Ferdinand Columbus, and occupies a large portion of the space between the entrance and the Trascoro. It is put up every year at great expense, and for some time detracts considerably from the beauty of the cathedral, its architecture jarring with the Gothic edifice under whose roof it stands. But once lighted, the disagreeable effect it produced before is readily forgiven. It is indeed a magnificent scene, when the procession leaves the High Altar and moves towards the monumento, when the sounds of that glorious hymn, the "Pange lingua gloriosa," re-echo through the vaulted aisles, and the vast multitudes around kneel amid all the pomp and ceremonial which the Church of Rome knows so well how to display.

But I prefer it when all this is over—at night; when the Miserere is concluded, and the crowd have deserted the building. Then it is indeed sublime! That huge temple of light losing itself in the dark roof above, making the deep night which reigns in the vast cathedral even blacker still—the consecrated Host reposing in the centre within its silver custodia—all around so tranquil and so silent. No sound to disturb the holiness of the scene, a few kneeling worshippers who have lingered until they could continue their devotions undisturbed, in their black veils and folded cloaks, only adding to the mystery and solemnity of the hour.

The Miserere here is not by any means worthy of such a cathedral. They have an immense orchestra placed within the High Altar, and the voices are completely drowned by the instrumental accompaniment, bad in all cases, but most particularly so in this solemn service, which owes its greatest charm to the singing. Spaniards

seem to have an objection to the organ, on any particular ceremony always substituting an orchestra. This is much to be deplored, especially where they have organs of such power and sweetness as those at Seville. The devout conduct of the Spaniards in church has rendered it necessary the last few years to divide the cathedral during the performance of the Miserere, as it does not commence until after dark: the men are admitted upon one side, the women on the other. Such is the Holy Week in Seville, where religion is made a mere spectacle, and where gay throngs meet to enjoy themselves—one excuse answering as well as another. And the streets are as gay as thronging multitudes can make them, and all looks bright and joyous. The balconies are crowded with spectators, and the ceremonies of the Holy Week prove no bad speculation for those who have windows to let along the line of procession.

After the excitement of the Semana Santa has died away, people's thoughts are engrossed with the fair, the next grand event which serves to break the monotony of Seville life. This Feria always takes place in the middle of April. Sometimes it falls during Easter week, but the Sevillanos prefer its coming afterwards, as strangers are then induced to prolong their stay, and where there are so few opportunities of amusement, it is decidedly a pity they should both arrive together. Only of late years the fair has been held in Seville. It used formerly to be at Mairena, which was the great centre of attraction; but now Mairena is comparatively deserted. If people expect to see in an Andalucian fair any resemblance to an English one, they will be grievously disappointed. There are no shows to tempt you to look at wonderful giants, or still more miraculous dwarfs, no monstrosities of any sort are to be found here, no charming booths full of all kinds of pretty things, where

you may buy fairings for your friends, and gingerbread for yourself—no; in Andalucia people indulge in less expensive amusements, chiefly in the most economical of all—walking about to see their friends and be seen themselves. The fact is, these are in reality cattle fairs, where horses and cows, sheep and pigs are brought for sale.

The Feria de Sevilla is held on a large open space outside the Puerta San Fernando, where in former days the victims of the Inquisition suffered. The view of the walls is very pretty from here, with the Giralda rising above them, and the pinnacles and buttresses of the cathedral surmounted by light and elegant iron crosses, which seem suspended in the air. The whole of this large open space at this festive season swarms with life. The Calle San Fernando, which leads to it, is almost the only long straight street in Seville. On this occasion it is covered with a canvas awning to shelter the passers-by from the burning rays of the sun, and is filled with booths for the sale of all descriptions of dulces and sweetmeats. Just outside the gate is a lottery for the benefit of one of the many charitable associations patronised by the Infanta, where all the rank and fashion of Seville seduce people into purchasing tickets which must prove prizes, and which inevitably turn out to be blanks.

Close along the walls is the fashionable promenade; here, in the early morning and the cool of the evening, people may be seen parading up and down, and numbers of carriages appear that were never seen before. The crowd is so dense it is hardly possible to move; but this suits the Spaniards, who follow each other backwards and forwards, laughing, talking, and are content. All the gay dresses that can be produced shine on this occasion, the most brilliant flowers are pressed into the service of

the jet-black hair, and the dressy white blonde mantilla replaces the ordinary black one.

Yet after all, the assemblage, in some respects, is very similar to what it would be in any other country. With the exception of the mantilla, all national costume has disappeared from among the upper classes. No dark eyes, speaking unutterable things, flash from under bandit-looking hats with the heavy cloak concealing the figure; no gay bespangled dresses among the ladies. All this is gone. Here and there may be seen some stray Maja, some girl celebrated for her beauty, who in order to attract more attention puts on this now neglected costume. It is a pretty pert-looking dress, but must be worn with a certain "gracia," which none but an Andaluza can ever hope to attain. This word is not to be translated; we have no equivalent for it in English, so it is no use seeking for it in the pages of the dictionary. It means a certain sort of indescribable piquancy, a sort of saucy grace, which must be seen to be understood.

As the Maja moves along she is saluted on every side with compliments and speeches of exaggerated praise, full, however, of poetic originality, which the men bestow on every woman whose dress, face or carriage has anything which pleases them. Such speeches here are no insult, on the contrary, they are a homage which men would almost think themselves rude if they neglected to pay. Numbers of chairs are placed about the promenade, where those who are fatigued with walking can rest and criticise the passing crowd; while many who dislike the trouble of returning to the town during the heat of the day, have tents pitched, where they breakfast, dine, and spend the day, keeping in fact open house during the fair.

We must, however, turn from the aristocratic portion of

the Feria, to the busy scene in which the people take the principal part, and where the peculiarities of Spanish costumes and Spanish manners still linger. This offers the greatest attraction to strangers. The eye rests first upon a long line of gipsy booths, each decorated with the red and yellow flag of Spain, where these strange people, decked out in all their finery, sit at the doors of the tents, making "buñuelos," a compound of flower and water, converted into a paste, and fried in oil. Eating these buñuelos at the fair of Seville, is as indispensable as whitebait at a Greenwich dinner, and every gipsy as you pass, enlarges on the superiority of her own, and invites you to go in and rest in her neatly-arranged tent.

They are all decked with pink and blue curtains, and clean little tables, where refreshments are to be had and fortunes told, although in this latter proceeding they do not seem to be as accomplished as their "dark" sisters in England. At night, these booths are lighted up, and thronged with dancers, who remain till a late hour. All around is a chaos of sounds of the most discordant nature, the chattering of the gipsies, the loud talking of the men who are buying and selling, disputing and bargaining, mingling with the multifarious noises proceeding from so many animals all congregated together. The choicest steeds from the renowned plains of Cordoba, fierce bulls from the flat grounds that border the Guadalquivir, troops of mules and of donkeys, of sheep and goats, are scattered about the fair in every direction. The din and whirl is beyond description: it is not with the voice alone that men converse, their hands are as eloquent as their tongues, and their flashing eyes and vehement gesticulations form altogether a scene of confusion, such as in our cool northern lands can hardly be imagined.

Now and then the scene is varied by the arrival of a Majo, or dandy, very gaily dressed, with his lady-love

on the horse behind him; the steed brightly caparisoned, with its striped red and yellow mantas and hanging fringe. The Majo himself, in his embroidered jacket, covered with gold and silver buttons, his two pocket handkerchiefs, which are quite indispensable, peeping out of his pocket on either side, and his embroidered gaiters most curiously worked in leather. The crowd make way for a calesa, which resembles the antiquated vehicles still in use at Naples, painted in all the most gaudy colours imaginable; the man sitting on the shafts to drive, with difficulty forcing his carriage through the throng, who are warned of his arrival by the jingling of the horse's bells. Amid all this congregated mass of human beings, talking, laughing, quarrelling, and singing, gipsies try to allure people into buying horses which have been made up and arranged for the occasion, while in other places they endeavour quietly to appropriate some stray goat or tempting pig, which disappears as if by magic from among its comrades, while its owner looks in vain for the active cunning culprit.

Numbers of foreigners may be seen forcing their way through the crowd, endeavouring to see everything that is going on: specimens of every nation; the grave and steady German; the light-hearted Frenchman, determined to be amused, entering into everything, utterly regardless what amusement he affords to others so long as he is amused himself; and last of all, abound our own countrymen, their independent style of dress rendering them visible at any distance, and the cry of "Inglés, Inglés!" always greets them as they pass along, as surely as though they bore the word imprinted on their wide-awakes and shooting coats, their identity being rendered even more unmistakeable when they seek to shelter it under the guise of the "sombrero calañés" and the "calesera Andaluz." And what different shades of character! with what varied

feelings are they gazing on the animated scene around! Here are a party of officers from Gibraltar, who have rushed over to "do" Seville, and the fair, and the Holy Week, and the bull-fights, all in the same breath. There stands another individual, cold and wrapt in his own English formality, looking on solemnly, and wondering how people can be amused with such nonsense; while another putting aside all this grandeur, mixes himself in everything, thinks it all capital fun, and sits down to help the Gitanas in making their buñuelos. Then come some Americans, pitying people for finding so much novelty in a Spanish fair, assuring them if they would only to come to the States they would find something worth seeing.

English ladies, too, were there in abundance, walking up and down amongst their dark rivals, some studying every feature of the scene, and trying to stamp its varied episodes on the pages of their drawing-books. Laughing urchins, their eyes sparkling with mischief, were disputing for the honour of sitting as models; some one appointing himself as guard of honour, and preventing others inconveniencing the sketcher, quite forgetting he was himself the most intrusive of them all. One Englishwoman, more sentimental than the rest, scarcely heeded the busy scene, so occupied was she in bringing to her mind the dreadful fires of the Inquisition, and vainly striving to ascertain the identical spot where the victims were sacrificed. A young enthusiast, too, was there, one who was drinking deep of the Castalian spring; but he was out of his element in this bewildering crowd; he sought seclusion and retirement in the poetic realms of Granada, and when we met him again, he was dwelling in the courts of the Alhambra, seeking for what he himself called, "the ungraspable."

The fair lasts three days, and among its principal

amusements, it is needless to say, are the bull-fights, the "corridas" where the Andalucians are to be seen in all their glory. Here they reign supreme; within these precincts everything bows to the will of the sovereign people; within its sanguinary area they reign undisturbed. Governments rule with a rod of iron, but on the threshold of the bull-ring their authority ceases, and here indeed may be found that freedom of which they are always boasting. "Spaniards are all equal in the sight of the law," is the first watchword of that constitution which is at this very moment trembling for its existence, and the foreigner who obtained his first opinion of the country from a "corrida," would be inclined to subscribe to the truth of the proposition. The fact is, the freedom which exists within the bull-ring, is exactly in an inverse proportion to that which reigns without. The more absolute the government, the more it suits them to humour the people; and so long as the naughty wayward child will not meddle with politics, but pay its taxes and hold its tongue, there cannot possibly be any objection to its amusing itself in the manner most agreeable to its fancy.

It may be regretted that there should be so much brutality in bull-fights, for as a spectacle they are beautiful, and the skill and address exhibited by the actors deserving of the highest meed of praise. What can be more animated than the Plaza before the performances begin?—the huge amphitheatre crowded with thousands of people in their gay costumes, the sparkling sun-light, the bright azure sky above, the clash of military music, the noise of the eager multitude, all combine to present a most attractive and engrossing scene. When the "cuadrilla" enters in procession and the "picadores" take up their position, and the active "chulos," in their brilliant dresses, disperse themselves over the arena, with their many-coloured "capas"

fluttering in the air, it is impossible not to feel the excitement of the moment, as the gates are thrown open at the sound of a trumpet, and the wild brute, the hero of the scene, rushes into the midst. But, how soon the aspect changes! Who but a Spaniard can look without horror and disgust at the barbarities to which the wretched horses are subjected? Torn and mangled, ridden till strength is exhausted, or left to die there, their bodies strewn around in every stage of expiring nature—it is too horrible! Many close their eyes, it is true, to these details, and ladies' fans are in requisition to shut out the more tragic incidents; but they inevitably occur, and are now inseparable from the proceedings of the day. Time was when the "picador" rode a splendid steed, and exercised all his skill to save him; and therefore the number of horses killed during the "corrida" was a sure criterion of the ferocity of the bulls, and consequent excitement of the sport. This doubtless led to the present practice of selecting the most worthless horses, which, instead of any effort being made to save them, are deliberately sacrificed to lend a fictitious appearance of fierceness to the bulls. The relief felt by the spectator is indescribable, when the varying changes of the drama put an end to the cruelties inflicted on the horses, and the "matador" enters alone and unaided, with nothing but his sword and crimson flag, his skill and nerve, to meet the maddened beast in the closing struggle. No one can fail to admire the grace and perfect self-possession displayed by a first-rate "espada," the firm yet elastic step, the ready hand, the cool eye, with which he plays with his terrible foe, and dares him to the attack, till the final moment, when mid-way in his maddened rush, he is checked by the cunning lounge, and drops lifeless at the feet of his assailant.

When one reflects on the customs and manners of the

country, of the feeling of cruelty which seems almost naturally to pervade the lower orders in every land, one can hardly be surprised at the admiration which the Spaniards entertain for a pastime in which there is so much to strike the imagination and so much address exhibited. In this country there is no society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, and people are never lectured about the wickedness of torturing them. From earliest childhood they are taken to see this favourite amusement of all classes, and are thus accustomed to witness the cruel features of the scene before the mind is sufficiently matured to enable them to reason on the subject; in fact, it grows with their growth, and they cannot comprehend its atrocity. Even the Infanta, when she goes, always takes her children. People, however, must not fancy that there is but one opinion in Spain with regard to bull-fights. Many Spaniards among the upper classes condemn them as loudly as we could do; and even in the lower orders I have heard several declare they did not approve of them.

A great change must take place in many ways before bull-fights will cease to become the favourite amusement of Spaniards. With the exception of Madrid, they are not, however, by any means of frequent occurrence, not more than three or four great ones taking place during the year. The celebrated espada, Montes, the prince of toreros, whose grace and elegance were unsurpassed, died about a twelvemonth ago. He left two representatives, who disputed the palm of superiority—Arjona and Redondo, better known by the names of Cúchares and Chiclanero. Some favoured one, some the other; the gentlemen generally asserting the superiority of the former, while the ladies took the latter under their especial patronage, his personal appearance being more prepossessing than that of his rival. But the contest

is now at an end; the recent death of Chiclanero, who died of consumption at Madrid during the last spring, has left Cúchares the sole champion of the arena. He generally resides at Seville, of which place he is a native; he has realised a considerable fortune, and has the reputation of being a very kind-hearted and charitable man.

The Plaza de Toros at Seville is one of the largest in Spain; as usual, it remains unfinished, but the vacancy thus left admits a view of the Giralda, which adds very much to the beauty of the spectacle.

Although the neighbourhood of Seville does not present the same attractions as the mountain scenery round Granada, many pretty rides may be taken through its olive-covered plains; more particularly along the low ridge of hills which rise in front of it, on the right bank of the Guadalquivir. The church of the ruined convent of San Juan de Alfarache crowns one of these hills, and is conspicuous from every quarter. In front, there is a platform which commands an enchanting view of Seville, with its snowy houses, its towers, its churches, its cathedral, and Giralda. The remains of the walls of a former fortress may be traced along the edge of the cliff, beneath which winds the river, covered with graceful sails.

This is a favourite place of resort on Sundays and fête days, when the people come and dance on the platform. The Guadalquivir is crowded with boats, and the music of the guitar and castanets, with the wild seguidillas re-echo along its waters. I cannot call them crystal, for the classic Betis is as muddy a river as one could well have the pleasure of seeing. It winds about in most fantastic turns; and although San Juan is only a short walk straight across the fields by Triana, the long sweep taken by the river makes it appear a considerable

distance to those who go by water. This convent belonged to the Franciscans, who first established themselves in 1398 in the buildings which were afterwards occupied by the Carthusians in Santa Maria de las Cuevas. Its courts are now deserted, and an old man keeps the key of the church, where service is sometimes performed. There is a retablo very much overloaded with ornaments, but containing some tolerable pictures; there is likewise a miraculous baptismal font, which used to replenish itself every year on Holy Saturday.

A fine wide road leads along the plain behind Triana to the village of Santi Ponce and the remains of Italica; or one may vary the ride by keeping to the high ground, and passing Castilleja de la Cuesta. An inscription over the door of a small house in this village marks the dwelling where Hernan Cortes died, the conqueror of Mexico, and one of the many victims of Spain's ingratitude. Little now remains of Italica: a small and ruined amphitheatre still proves that it was once a Roman city, but the birthplace of Trajan is now little better than a quarry which supplies materials for adjacent buildings. This is the only use that Spaniards make of ruins. The stones are cut and fashioned ready at hand, and they may as well be turned to account. They serve to erect other edifices, which, in their turn, may be employed as quarries by future generations.

The neighbouring convent of San Isidoro del Campo was partly erected with the stones from Italica, and now it stands a mere ruin likewise. Half fortress, half convent; it bears witness to the former magnificence of the Guzmans, and commands a charming view of the surrounding country. It was founded by Guzman el Bueno, one of the great heroes of Spanish history, on the spot where the bones of St. Isidore, the learned Bishop of Seville, had been discovered. It was

endowed with large possessions and territorial jurisdiction, and belonged to the Jeronymites. It wears now a sad aspect of desolation; and nothing can be more melancholy than its lonely cloisters, all covered with a damp mossy hue.

The church consists of two naves; in the principal one, which was erected by Guzman, he and his wife lie interred on either side of the high altar.

Here lies the intrepid chieftain, who, with more than Spartan fortitude, saw his son murdered before his face rather than surrender the fortress of Tarifa, which he had assisted his sovereign in rescuing from the Moors. He served his country well, and at last fell in a skirmish near Gaucin in the year 1309. His son and daughter-in-law are buried in the adjoining chapel. The retablo is by Montanes, and contains a beautiful statue of St. Jerome by this celebrated sculptor.

Returning to Triana, you pass the Carthusian monastery of Santa Maria de las Cuevas, once renowned for its wealth, now converted into a porcelain manufactory under the management of an Englishman. The beautifully carved wood-work of the choir has been transferred to the Museum; a small portion, however, still remains in a chapel which Mr. Pickman keeps consecrated to its orignal purpose. The large church is converted into a workshop, and men are now busy manufacturing porcelain within its precincts. The gardens, which are very extensive, are filled with orange-trees; and in one corner those English are buried who happen to die in Seville, for here the Protestants have no cemetery of their own, and none but those who profess the established religion of the land can be interred within the burial-grounds.

The corporation of Seville have lately had a new cemetery laid out on the northern side of the town, ostensibly for the greater benefit of the inhabitants who

were subjected in summer to the wind blowing all the malaria from the old cemetery over the town. In reality, however, a desire to be agreeable in higher quarters has had some small share in the extreme interest shown in this instance for the public health; the Infanta and the Duke not approving of the close vicinity of the old cemetery to the gardens of the Palace.

The old walls of Seville are in some parts very well preserved, and some of the square towers still look imposing. Some portions are picturesque enough, more particularly near the Caños de Carmona: an aqueduct by which water is conveyed from Alcalá de Guadaira to the city. This town lies on the high road to Madrid, about two leagues from Seville, and a charming excursion may be made to it. Alcalá is almost entirely inhabited by bakers, the bread consumed in Seville being made there. The greatest care is bestowed upon the preparation of the corn, and the kneading of it; and certainly their labour is not in vain, for Spanish bread is first-rate, very white and close.

Alcalá boasts of the remains of one of the largest Moorish castles in Andalucia. It is a picturesque ruin, a delightful place for a pic-nic: such shady grass-grown courts, such fine old walls to scramble among, such views to repay those who have enterprise enough to ascend its towers! The Guadaira flows along the base of the hill on which it stands, while the Giralda towering in the distance, marks the site of Seville.

There are many pleasant rides over the plains which surround Seville, and what with the excursions in the neighbourhood, and the many interesting things enclosed within its walls, a winter may be very agreeably spent by those who do not care about society, for in that respect, as I have before mentioned, Seville offers nothing to tempt the traveller. But it has its charms: its lovely

houses, and its fine climate make it a very liveable place, and its vicinity to Cadiz renders it easy of access.

There is hardly any winter here; a bright sun and an unclouded sky cheer one even at Christmas. February is generally the worst season, wet and cold and uncomfortable, but it does not last long, and the climate is infinitely preferable to to that of Malaga. It is certainly much damper, and more rain falls than at Malaga, although even here the wet days are few. But it is free from the dry, cold winds and insupportable dust which render the latter so disagreeable; there is a far greater softness and mildness in the air, and its lovely walks along the banks of the river are always charming. But the winter and spring are the enjoyable months; in summer the heat is insupportable. Even in the month of May the streets become like furnaces; and then all who can leave the town, take refuge on the coast, and emigrate to catch the sea breezes at San Lucar and Cadiz; and those who are obliged to remain during the summer months, descend to the ground-floor, and live under the shade of the awning, amid the fountains and the flowers of their patios, where they shut themselves up all day long, only going out when the night is far advanced to enjoy the cool air.

Seville is rather expensive for a Spanish town, but still, living here is moderate enough, and there is not anything to tempt people to spend their money, except on the actual necessaries of life. The narrow streets and bad pavement render it almost a penance to go out in a carriage, and the bad roads in the neighbourhood deter one from driving in the country. Horses, however, are easily had, and excellent ones too, spirited yet gentle, as Andalucian horses generally are. There is little to invite one in the shops; unlike the numerous temptations offered to the traveller in every Italian town, here it is almost impossible

to procure any object which might serve even as a souvenir of the place.

It is surprising that Seville is not more resorted to than it is. There is no doubt that the difficulty of procuring furnished apartments is a great drawback to strangers, more particularly to invalids. There are some few medical men who have fair reputations for skill, and a considerable improvement has undoubtedly been made on the old Spanish ideas of medical science, when bleeding was considered the infallible remedy for every disease that mortal man is heir to. Some of the rising school have been educated in Paris; and invalids may place far more confidence in them, and feel far more security than the generally received accounts of Spanish doctors would lead them to imagine. It is, however, very difficult to divest oneself of old prejudices, and people have so long been accustomed to hear of the low state of the medical profession in Spain, that they forget its members can improve as well as other people. The system they adopt, likewise tends to discourage English visitors, and inspire them with a want of confidence; for accustomed as they are to the strong medicines and violent remedies employed at home, they are too apt to look with great distrust, nay, almost with contempt, on prescriptions which are principally composed of decoctions of mallow, violets, "caldo blanco," and such like innocent remedies, which prove, however, very efficacious in this hot climate. It would, perhaps, be as well for foreigners to remember, that in these southern lands the medical men of the country are far more likely to understand what treatment may be suitable for incidental complaints, than those who are alike strangers to the climate, the air, and, in fact, every local peculiarity.

Notwithstanding the absence of society, and other drawbacks, no one can reside for any time in Seville

without retaining pleasant recollections of many happy and agreeable hours spent beneath its azure sky, during its bright sunny winter months. Its streets and houses have a joyous look, and no one can fail to like its kind and light-hearted people, who, in spite of many faults, have charms which are peculiarly their own.

There is constant communication between Seville and Cadiz, by means of steamers, which go backwards and forwards almost every day. The fares are high, but people here have not yet learned to understand that low fares increase the numbers of passengers. The view of Seville from the river is very pretty, but once past San Juan de Alfarache and the orange groves opposite to it, nothing can be more uninteresting or tiresome, than the whole course of the Guadalquivir to the sea. Flat plains, almost level with the water's edge, are alone to be seen, where huge droves of cattle roam about undisturbed, and where the effect of the mirage is repeated at every turn of the river, while flights of wild fowl hover above. Water is raised from it at the few villages along its banks, much in the same way as from the Nile, by means of a pole with a bucket at one end. There is nothing to relieve the monotony until the vast pine forests of San Lucar de Barrameda offer some slight variety. Here, at a short distance from San Lucar, at a place called Bonanza, the steamers stop to land those passengers who prefer crossing overland to Cadiz. It is sometimes very rough going over the bar, and many avail themselves of this mode of avoiding the sea portion of the trip.

San Lucar is a great resort for the inhabitants of Seville in summer, and the Infanta is now building a palace there. Crossing the bar, you come out into the open sea. On your left stands the white church of of N. S. de Regla, on the promontory of Chipiona.

This sanctuary belonged formerly to the Augustines, and contains a miraculous image of the Virgin, held in much veneration by sailors. Soon, the white houses of the sea-girt city rise from the surface of the ocean, protected from its stormy rage by walls, against which the surge breaks in sheets of foam, and the tall masts of the shipping give signs of life and commerce.

Cadiz may be seen in a few hours: it affords little of interest; and though in point of fact the most ancient, it appears the most modern of Spanish towns. The streets are narrow, but kept in excellent order; the houses very high, with flat roofs, and lofty miradores, whence many a lovely view may be obtained of the bay, the distant mountains, and the blue waters of the Atlantic dotted with tiny sails. The town, from its position, is naturally very limited in its extent: it stands upon a peninsula connected with the main land by a long and narrow causeway, over which the sea dashes in stormy weather. It is fortified as well upon the land as the sea side, and its walls look formidable enough, however neglected and ineffective they may be in reality. Cadiz is a kind of prison on a large scale, for, except by sea, there is but one way out of the town, leading along the narrow strip of land just mentioned, where the cemeteries are placed. Here, there is one for the English, very prettily laid out. There are some fine squares. The Alameda lies along the walls, overlooking the sea and bay, and here, for want of a larger space, the inhabitants have to walk. Cadiz is badly supplied with water, and what they have is collected from the roofs of the houses during the wet season, and preserved in tanks. The streets are lighted with gas, rather a novelty in Spain.

There is a very pretty theatre, and a great deal more society here than at Seville, even in winter, and in summer

it is rendered very gay by the numbers who come to take advantage of the sea bathing. The cathedral is a modern structure, full of costly marbles, but exhibiting more richness than good taste. It was built nearly entirely at the expense of the late bishop, who devoted all his resources to this object. He was greatly beloved, and died, as he lived, almost in poverty. The most interesting building in Cadiz is the old Capuchin Convent, now a school for children. In its gardens are some of the finest palm-trees in Andalucia, and amongst them I noticed the doum-palm which grows in Upper Egypt. In the church are some fine works of Murillo, and no one can contemplate the altar-piece of the "Marriage of St. Catherine," without feelings of interest, for this, the artist's last performance, was in reality the cause of his death. He fell from the scaffold while painting it, and was so severely injured that he was conveyed to Seville, where he died shortly afterwards. This altar-piece was finished by one of his pupils.

A pleasant sail may be taken round the bay. The low ground at the upper end presents a curious appearance from the pyramids of salt which glitter in the sun: large quantities are produced by simple evaporation beneath the sun's rays. Salt is another of the Government monopolies in Spain. They carry their fear of its being interfered with to such an extent, that they do not allow any water to be taken from the sea lest a few grains of salt might be extracted from it. To procure a salt-water bath you must have a permission signed by a medical man, or give a gentle fee in the right quarter. Fancy Protection, not satisfied with endeavouring to fetter the produce of the earth, but seeking to extend its dominions over the very waters of the ocean!

A visit should be paid to the Caraccas, formerly the great naval arsenal; but its workshops are now tenant-

less and deserted. The country that possessed the first navy in the world, whose galleons brought the tribute of new worlds to her shores, has never recovered the fatal battle of Trafalgar, when she paid for her alliance with France by the destruction of her fleet. Much as one may moan over the ruins of stately edifices, whose architectural beauties may have been defaced by revolutionary madness, or the fury of invading armies, there is yet something more painful in remains such as these, where once the busy hum of active industry resounded. The former tell of the wealth or of the piety of private individuals; but the latter speak of the wealth and power of a nation—attest the dominion it formerly exercised—the grandeur of empire which has passed away. Well indeed may Spain exclaim in the words of her poet:

Aprended, flores, de mi
Lo que va de ayer á hoy;
Que ayer maravilla fué
Y hoy sombra mia, no soy.

MANTILLA DE LIRO.

CHAPTER IX.

The sacred taper's lights are gone,
Grey moss has clad the altar stone,
The holy image is o'erthrown,
The bell has ceased to toll.
The long-ribbed aisles are burst and shrunk,
The holy shrines to ruin sunk,
Departed is the pious monk,
God's blessing on his soul!

REDIVIVA.

A RIDING TOUR TO GRANADA—PORT ST. MARY'S—XERES—THE CARTUJA—SUPPRESSION OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS—MONASTIC RUINS—START FROM XERES—ARCOS—HOSPITALITY—SPLENDID SCENERY—A FOREST RIDE—MID-DAY HALT—ABSENTEE PROPRIETORS—EL BOSQUE—MORE HOSPITALITY—BENIMOHAMMED—GRAZALEMA—NADA PARTICULAR—THE THEATRE—STRANGERS A DECIDED NOVELTY—ROAD TO RONDA.

IT was on one of those delicious spring days that gladden the month of May in this heavenly clime, that we went on board the steamer which plies between Cadiz

and Puerto Santa Maria, or "the Puerto," as it is more emphatically called by the inhabitants of the neighbouring towns. The bay never wore a lovelier aspect; the snow-white city rising from the blue waters, with its green balconies so fresh and bright, and in the distance the tall peaks of the Serrania of Ronda, whither we were about to bend our steps.

All looked beautiful, and our spirits too were buoyant, animated by the scene around, and the prospect of a regular expedition before us—a good scramble through the wild Sierras. No one who has not made this sort of tour can understand the full enjoyment to be derived from it—an enjoyment which those who study only how to travel with the greatest amount of comfort can never appreciate. Let none whose ideas of travel and its delights are associated with rolling over a capital road in a luxurious carriage drawn by four swift horses, and looking forward all the while to the well-dressed dinner and warm rooms, all in readiness for their reception,—let none who consider these things an indispensable accompaniment to travelling venture on an excursion through the mountains of Andalucia. But to those who for a while can postpone personal indulgences for the contemplation of the beauties of nature, who love to see something of the manners and habits of the people in whose land they are wandering, who care not for the fatigues and discomforts they may have to encounter, but are ready to be satisfied with everything, and take all that may befal them with a light heart and a merry laugh, a riding tour is one of those enjoyable events which only those who have tried can thoroughly appreciate.

What can be more exhilarating than the fresh mountain air, the early rising, the wild life of going where you like and stopping when it pleaseth you; the mid-day halt for refreshment in some shady spot where the air is cooled

with running water, the ride again at each turn offering some enchanting prospect, ever-changing, ever-varying; and then the arrival; the preparations for the evening meal, and for passing the night as comfortably as means will allow, affording a never-ending source of amusement; the groups scattered round the fires at the country ventas; the constant intercourse with the people among whom you are so completely thrown, the insight it affords you into their habits, the plans to be arranged for the morrow, all combine to give to riding excursions in these Southern climes a peculiar charm! The bright, unclouded sky above infuses into one fresh life and vigour; and after such expeditions, all other modes of travelling appear flat and uninteresting.

Our steamer was not the most orthodox specimen of naval architecture; but it did all that was required of it, and carried its passengers backwards and forwards three or four times a-day under the guidance of an Irish engineer, who doctored the machinery whenever it fell sick, and who declared that it went "as well, if not better," than when it was new. Myles Cogan was the name of the guardian-angel who had presided over the safety-valves of this crazy old thing for upwards of six years; and a very characteristic specimen he was of his race, with his shrewd, laughing, grey eye, his mouth stretching from ear to ear, and his whole countenance beaming with good-nature. He has taken to himself a Spanish wife, and the youthful offspring claim a common descent from the O'Cogan and the Cid, "the shamrock of Erin and the olive of Spain." He was charmed at finding some of his countrymen on board, and offered his services in the fashion of his adopted land; at the same time wisely retiring to perform for us the most effectual service in his power, that of guiding us safely into the harbour of Port St. Mary.

The Custom House officers not finding that our baggage contained many contraband articles, were content to let us pass without molestation; and having engaged our places in the diligence which runs between this place and Xeres, we proceeded to refresh ourselves at the hospitable mansion of a friend, where we were most warmly and kindly received. This place is uninteresting, but is much frequented in summer by those who fly from the heat of Seville and the neighbouring towns; there are likewise some resident wealthy families, the wine trade being carried on almost as extensively here as at Xeres, for which latter town it serves as the point of export.

Our diligence started very punctually, and we were soon ensconced in the interior with two such companions! Two perfect specimens of the oldest, fattest, and ugliest women that this land—which, by the way, is not deficient in such articles—could produce. In these sultry climes beauty quickly passes away; and certainly the more ancient portion of the population, be they male or female, retain very little of the good looks with which they may have been blessed in their more juvenile days. One of our friends was endowed with a most remarkable appendage, which lent an additional charm to her countenance, in the shape of a pair of black, wiry moustaches, whose luxuriance would have shamed many a young aspirant to such honours. The heat was great, and was rendered still more insupportable by the dust—that curse of this dry, thirsty land, which envelopes you on the high road, and forms no small addition to the many inconveniences which accompany travelling by diligence in the Peninsula.

The country was arrayed in an emerald garb, the corn was ripe—and indeed much of it had been already cut—the road was in capital order, and the view over the bay

from a small eminence quite magnificent. The distant city seemed no unworthy rival of stately Venice, as she rose from the ocean, with her sea-girt walls and snow-white houses, and from that distance appeared so lovely, that the proud Queen of the Adriatic need hardly have felt herself injured by the comparison. Near the road, about half way to Xeres, a small ruined castle, embosomed in trees, is pointed out as the prison of the fair Blanche of Bourbon, the injured and persecuted wife of Peter the Cruel. Here, they say, she was murdered by the orders of her husband, who, after the death of his favourite, Maria de Padilla, finding no longer any excuse for treating her with his previous neglect, determined to put her out of the way, in order to free himself from an alliance which he had always regarded with horror. I know not why tradition should have selected this spot as the scene of this foul crime, for historians seem tolerably agreed that she was murdered at Medina Sidonia, in the fortress of which place she had been for some time imprisoned. The noble-minded governor refused to obey the cruel mandate, but a tyrant always finds minions ready to minister to his cruelty; and Ortiz de Zuñiga was quickly replaced by one who consented to sacrifice the mild and virtuous queen at the command of his royal master.

Whether this spot be or not, the scene where the ill-fated Blanche terminated a life of suffering, the plains below are classic ground in Spanish history. Through them a silver stream may be seen meandering, its waters now glistening in the sun, now concealed, its course only marked by the sails of the small boats which are taking their cargoes of wine down from Xeres to the Puerto. This stream is the Guadalete, which eleven hundred years ago flowed down in the self same course, red with the blood of contending armies: and on those

plains was decided the fate of the Gothic empire in Spain. On the low ground which intervenes between this river and the town of Medina Sidonia, the armies of the Moslem and the Christian met. At the expiration of eight days of continuous conflict, the Cross was trampled in the dust, and the Caliphs of the East claimed one of the fairest provinces in Europe as their own. The remnant of the Christian host fled into the remote corners of the Asturias, whence the descendants of Pelayo gradually emerged to regain the kingdom that Roderick had lost. The fifteenth century beheld the final destruction of the Moslem power in the west of Europe; but the same century saw it established in the east, and the banner of Islam waved upon the walls of Constantinople a few short years before it was lowered from the citadel of Granada.

At a place called El Portal, the wines of Jerez are shipped for conveyance down the river to the Puerto, where the Guadalete falls into the bay. A railroad is now, however, in progress between Xeres and Cadiz, and is rapidly approaching completion. The town presented a gay and animated appearance as we entered; it was Ascension Day, and many groups were scattered about in the Plaza enjoying themselves. Like most of the cities in Audalucia, it is clean and joyous-looking, the whitewashed houses and green balconies stamping it with the same peculiar character possessed by Seville. It contains many handsome houses, some the abode of ancient noble families, others belonging to those wealthy merchants whose fortunes lie in its vine-clad hills. It offers but little of interest in the way of architectural monuments. The enormous wine-stores or "bodegas" form the chief source of attraction, and are the "lions" generally visited by travellers. Here in large shed-roofed buildings, above ground, are ranged

hundreds and thousands of casks, containing wines of every price and quality, and affording to the connoisseur an interesting study, in learning how by frequent and skilful mixing of the produce of the different vineyards, the famous wines of Xeres are prepared for the foreign market.

The church of San Miguel is fine, the exterior remarkably pretty; but the richly decorated pillars of Gothic work are disfigured by such an incrustation of whitewash, that little of their beauty is left. The Collegiate church has not much to recommend it; it did not appear either to be much frequented, for we were there during the celebration of high mass, and the congregation did not consist of more than half a dozen old women; but then it was neither Sunday nor a fête day.

The object of greatest interest in the neighbourhood of Xeres is the celebrated Cartuja, or Carthusian monastery, which stands on an eminence about a league from the town, overhanging the Guadalete, and commanding an extensive view of the vineyards and corn-fields of the surrounding country, many a rich tract of which belonged to its former possessors. We spent a whole day there, sketching and wandering about its deserted halls and cloisters. The coach which conveyed us thither was one of those antiquated vehicles, which might have formed the pride of our ancestors some hundred years ago. It was drawn by five horses. They managed to carry us over the dangers of the road without any adventure worth recording; dragging us and our lumbering vehicle at a measured pace through the dust, which was nearly axle deep, and over ruts which would have upset anything but a Spanish carriage, driven by a Spaniard, and drawn by Spanish horses.

Like all Carthusian convents, it is a splendid pile of

building. Here the followers of San Bruno, if their enemies say true, made amends for the severity of the rules imposed on them by their founder, by enjoying every luxury wealth could afford. Extensive courtyards, now all covered with weeds and grass, led into a succession of patios and pillared cloisters, adorned with marble fountains or tall sombre cypresses. From the largest cloister—a magnificent square of a hundred paces — opened out the cells of the monks, disposed with every regard to comfort and neatness, being divided into summer and winter habitations, and having a small garden behind each, commanding the most enchanting views. Thence they could gaze upon their broad lands, and watch the proud steeds roaming through the pastures on the plains beneath. These served to keep up the fine race of Andalucian horses, for which the Cartuja was famous, an employment which however incongruous it may appear, with a life of religious meditation, formed one of the most important and lucrative occupations of the worthy monks. I cannot quite go as far as a Spanish writer, who declares no pilgrim ever visited this monastery without wishing to end his days in so enchanting a spot; but it is very beautiful, and sad indeed is the appearance it presents in its now dilapidated condition. A more melancholy scene I never gazed on than these deserted courts, where the silence of the monks has been succeeded by the silence of desolation, where the crumbling walls and desecrated altars bear witness to the sacrilegious hands which have invaded their holy places.

Such scenes as these, make us think of the days when the same might have been witnessed in our own country. We now contemplate the ruined monasteries of England with delight and admiration; the time which has elapsed since their destruction has softened down the harsher and more painful features of their fall; and as we gaze upon

them, enraptured with their picturesque appearance, we forget that they must have presented an aspect as sad as that of the one we had before us, when in the first fury of religious zeal, their altars were thrown down and desecrated; but here, it is all too recent, too present for even the passing traveller to gaze upon such desolate scenes unmoved. We cannot help grieving over the blind fanaticism, or rather heartless policy which could not even spare the consecrated piles, when it drove forth their unhappy inmates from the homes which they had reared with such skill and labour. And here the attacks on religious property had not even the apology of a change of creed; it did not come from those who were seeking to overturn the long established religion of the land. It came from her own sons—from those who, still professing obedience to the Church, deprived its clergy of all their revenues. The regular orders were almost entirely suppressed, and a certain number of secular clergy were placed on a par with the naval and military establishments, and received, and still receive, an annual stipend from the government.

It was in 1835 that this remarkable change took place in Spain—a change which however beneficial it may eventually prove, was accompanied by much hardship, suffering and injustice at the time. A strong feeling against the religious orders had been for some period gaining deep hold of people's minds. The abuses which existed in many convents, the conduct of the clergy themselves, and the manner in which men who had dedicated their lives to religious meditation and retirement from the world, forgot their vows amid the wealth and luxury they were enjoying, had predisposed all classes to look upon them with no very friendly eye; and this feeling against them was rapidly increased by the state of political parties in the Peninsula at that period. Under the plea

that they were favouring the cause of Don Carlos—of whom there is no doubt the large majority were most devoted adherents—the preparations for the coming blow were made by adding fuel to the flame, and inciting the anger of the people against them. The convents and monasteries were reported to be only so many asylums, where the adherents of the Pretender found a ready refuge and hearty welcome. Many were the reports spread in every direction, even that of poisoning the wells was industriously circulated. Popular fury burst forth at last. In Barcelona, Zaragoza, and other towns, the convents were attacked by the infuriated populace, the friars found no safety from their vengeance, even at the foot of the altars, which were crimsoned with their blood; many fell victims to the rage of their enemies, while others with difficulty found safety in flight. The existing government seemed to bow before the general expression of popular feeling; they resigned the power, which fell into the hands of Mendizabel, under whose ministry the decree came forth. The vast possessions of the clergy were confiscated, and the inmates of the monasteries and convents were thrown upon that world from which they had been so long secluded, wanderers and houseless, to commence life anew, receiving a small stipend, barely sufficient for their support.

Many sought refuge in foreign climes, others retired to their homes, others accepted the charge of some neighbouring parish, while some few remained in their deserted convents. Sad must it have been for these last to wander through their ruined cloisters, those cold and dreary passages, once peopled by their brotherhood, and look down on the fruitful orchards and fair lands which once were theirs—now transferred to the hands of strangers, who enrich themselves with their produce while they reside in some distant spot. The sale of these vast

possessions did not benefit the coffers of the state as much as was anticipated by those who have been so eager to bring about the work of spoliation. Many were afraid of investing money from a feeling of insecurity—a dread that some future government, actuated by different motives, might entertain the idea of restoring the confiscated property to its rightful owners. Much that was purchased was paid for in paper issued by the government, and some few may, perhaps, have been deterred from a feeling of reverential awe at appropriating to themselves property which so recently belonged to the Church.

That the clergy possessed far too much wealth in this country no one will deny. The great number of monastic remains, which crowd every city and village in Spain, testify how they established themselves over the length and breadth of the land. Wheresoever the traveller turns his steps, he comes across some palace convent, rearing its head in the ancient capitals of Spain's many kingdoms; or if he wanders into the mountain districts, he will find a monastic building nestling in the depths of the tranquil vale, or crowning with its frowning battlements the beetling crags of the lone Sierra. Nothing but ruins! Spain is indeed a land of ruins, which tell of the power of the priesthood in days gone by, and of its utter nothingness in these. It has passed away as though it never had been; and the country, where so much has been done in the name of religion, is now more indifferent to it than any other nation. Although much may have been gained by throwing so large an amount of property into general circulation among a class who will turn it to more account and diffuse its benefits more generally—although in a comprehensive view it may have benefited the country, still, individually, it must have been a sad blow to thousands of poor people, both in the towns and in the rural districts, who were employed by the

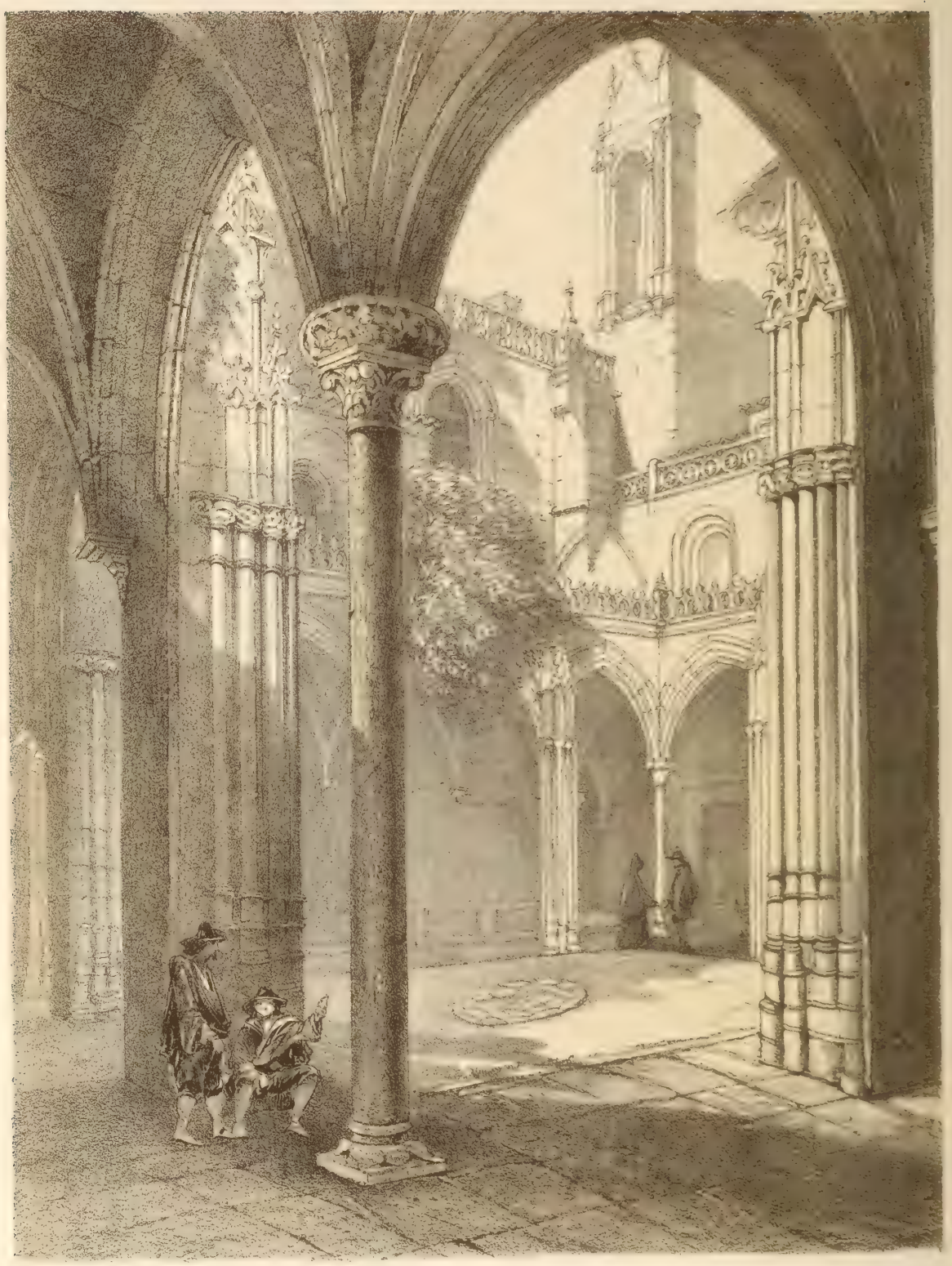
religious communities, or who depended upon them for assistance and relief in their sufferings and distress. Here the great proprietors seldom visit their possessions; in the country villages there is no one to whom the poor can look up to as their friends and protectors. This want was, in some measure, supplied by the convents; a vast number of dependents clustered round these buildings, and their inmates were always ready to aid the poor and bestow alms upon the needy. If their possessions were extensive, they were at least resident landlords, and spent their revenues among the people from whom they were derived. None were turned away from their hospitable roofs. But now, huge piles of tottering walls alone remain to remind them that their benefactors have been removed; all is silent, where the gentle voice of charity offered the means of lessening their misery in this world, while the minister of religion was ready to soothe them with words of comfort for the next.

All great and sudden changes must be accompanied by suffering to some, and by gain to others, and in this instance many will be found who are as enthusiastic in their approbation of the extinction of the religious orders, as others will be vehement in condemning it. But, although there may much to be said in its favour, and much against it—as affecting the political or religious state of the country—much to praise and much to blame, but one opinion can be entertained as to the reckless spirit of destruction which has levelled to the ground some of the most glorious evidences of the faith and piety of byegone days, involving the inmates and their dwellings in one general annihilation. The preservation of their dwellings could not necessarily have involved the return of the monks; they might have been adapted to other purposes, converted into some use which would have insured their preservation; and some, which possessed

beauty as specimens of architecture, or were celebrated as classic spots in Spanish history, might have been guarded for their own intrinsic worth. The great majority are converted into barracks or prisons, where the soldiers and the galley slaves destroy the venerable monuments, and profane the cloister and the church; while others are sold for the value of their materials, and a few thousand reals are taken for triumphs of architectural skill, which it would cost millions to erect. The libraries have been dispersed, or have mouldered away uncared for; the pictures which adorned the churches, have been scattered among foreign collections, and many have been defaced and lost; some of the elaborately carved choirs have been taken to museums, but many are rotting in the crumbling churches; the ashes of the dead have been torn up and scattered to the winds, and the costly monuments, which the pride and piety of past generations led them to erect over the graves of their relatives, have been mutilated or destroyed.

It is unfortunately too true—but it so nevertheless—that wherever the traveller turns his eye in Spain, he has but to exclaim: "How sad! how melancholy! what a pity this should be left to destruction!" He has to utter one unceasing lamentation, to moan over everything he sees, for everything speaks of neglect, decay and ruin. The same regrets may be re-echoed in every town he visits. A spirit of utilitarianism has seized hold of the Peninsula, and while Spaniards are sighing for railroads, and other evidences of the civilization of the nineteenth century, they are allowing all traces of the past to vanish from the land, forgetting that they might combine the two, and that while they seek to have a Present, worthy of other nations, they might still cherish all that could recal with pride the memory of the Past.

But to return to the Cartuja, whose mouldering walls called forth the above remarks. This monastery was



founded in 1475 by a Genoese, Alvaro Oberto de Valeto, and its Doric portal was erected by Andrés de Rivera. The façade has been much injured by modern improvements. There are several courts with fountains in the centre, and the two cloisters, which always form so characteristic a feature in buildings dedicated to the followers of San Bruno, are of Gothic architecture. The hand of time has stamped the beautiful proportions of the smaller one with a damp, ruined look; and the wild fig, which grows upon its buttresses, and climbs along the decorated parapet, contrasts with the rich colours of the stone. From this cloister, a corridor leads into the church. The groined roof is painted in blue and silver stars; the carved wood-work of the choir still remains, a screen, as is customary, dividing off a portion for the lay brethren. The high altar, denuded of its ornaments, stands in reproach, as it were, of the desecration that has been carried on around; its design is truly elegant and tasteful, in lozenges of black and white marble, with a plain black cross in the centre. The altars of the side chapels, all of costly marbles, have been torn down and broken—some lying about, while others have been sold and converted into chimney-pieces.

Behind the church are various smaller chapels and apartments; likewise the ovens, in which the bread for consecration was prepared. The refectory also opens out of the inner cloister,—an apartment but little used by the Carthusians—the rules of their order only allowing them to dine together upon fête days, or when one of the fraternity died, when they met to console each other on the loss they had sustained. A large cross of rough wood is placed against the wall at one extremity. In the large outer cloister are the cells for the monks, which I have already noticed, where they had each a habitation to themselves, with an aperture in the wall, through

which their meals were handed to them, as they always dined alone, save on the occasions just alluded to. The centre of this outer cloister is planted with cypresses, and here the monks were buried. Magnificent as it is, I prefer the small, low walls of the humble cemetery of their brethern at the Cartuja of Miraflores, near Burgos; it seems more befitting those who had foresworn the vanities of the world, a meet resting-place for men who passed their lives in prayer. And, perhaps, the Carthusians of Miraflores had in life acted up more to the rules of their order, for they were in reality poor, and could not rival, in the splendour of their monastery, with their wealthier brethern on the banks of the Guadalete.

Reflecting on these changes, we were wandering about unmolested in the courts, where a few short years before the footsteps of a woman spread consternation in the minds of the worthy monks, and perilled both their present and future welfare. No female is ever allowed to enter the precincts of any building dedicated to the disciples of San Bruno. In 1418, this rule was, however, so far relaxed, as to admit of sovereigns and members of reigning families entering them; but the inmates of the Cartuja of Xeres seemed unwilling to admit even of these exceptions, for when Queen Christina happened to be staying in the town, and announced her intention of visiting them, the community were thrown into a state of frightful consternation. One of the monks having bethought himself of a plan by which the convent might be saved from the consequences of the impending calamity, communicated his views to the prior, who at once adopted his suggestion.

The Queen arrived, and was escorted over the building, but behind her followed two monks, who watched with careful anxiety every step she took; and on every stone,

or brick, on which the sovereign trod, a large white mark was soon impressed. The royal visit concluded, the obnoxious bricks were immediately taken up, and thrown into the Guadalete; others were substituted, and peace of mind was restored to the community. How little they then foresaw that, ere a few years passed away, their cloisters would indeed be desecrated, their possessions confiscated, and they themselves cast forth as exiles in the world. We ascended the tower whence there is a fine view, the building standing on a projecting terrace, overhanging the river, and almost insulated by its serpentine windings; the extensive gardens sloping down to its banks, and beyond the vine-covered hills, and the rich plains where Roderick lost his empire and his life. Now it is all covered with golden corn and verdant pastures.

After a long day spent in drawing and wandering about, without any attendants to mark our footsteps, we returned to Xeres to dine at the hospitable house of a fellow-countryman, to whose kindness we owed much during our stay, and under whose guidance we had been to the Cartuja.

And now our riding preparations were complete; all arrangements had been made with the owner of the horses, and our provisions and necessaries for the journey being packed, we sallied forth from Xeres, on the road to Arcos. A first start is always followed by many stoppages, some of the luggage is sure to tumble off the horses; the guides, as yet unused to it, do not distribute the weight equally, the great secret of making the horses carry their loads with comfort to themselves; this and that have to be arranged, and re-arranged, but at last things are right, and one gets fairly under weigh. The heat was intense, and the dust at first insupportable, for we had to keep to a sort of road for some short distance,

with cactus and aloe hedges jealously guarding the rich vineyards on each side with their stiff spear-like leaves and sharp prickly points.

We soon, however, reached the open plain, when the road gradually diminished into a mere track-way through the dwarf palm and brushwood. Freed from dust, and refreshed by a slight breeze, we passed over the two leagues that brought us to the Castillo del Moro, an old ruined castle on a height, commanding the plain, in which stands Xeres and its surrounding vineyards. Here we entered upon an undulating country, and passed the great Carthusian farms, once so celebrated for their breed of horses. Though scarcely a sign of habitation appeared, still the land seemed well cultivated, and the vast fields of the black-bearded wheat and dwarf pea were varied now and then by small grassy knolls, covered with low brushwood and glittering with wild flowers.

We were gradually approaching the mountains, and at last we saw the town of Arcos; but from the transparency of the atmosphere, and the nature of the country, interspersed as it is by strange ravines, or rather clefts, which oblige one to take all sorts of "détours" to get round them, you often see a place ages before you reach it, and so, like the mirage which tantalizes the wanderer in the desert, Arcos appeared to recede as we advanced. We kept ascending, and the keen mountain air warned us that we had left the sunny neighbourhood of the low country round Xeres.

At length, a turn in the road disclosed to us the town of Arcos, and most picturesque it appeared, crowning the heights of a steep and precipitous cliff, at whose base flowed the Guadalete. A long line of houses crested the rocks, and at the extremity, where the ridge terminated abruptly, a lower town might be seen nestling in the valley. Nothing could be more striking than the view

as we wound along, with the town before us standing on the giddy heights, the luxuriant vegetation of the plain, dotted over with white houses, encircled by their olive-groves, the tall peak of the Cristobal beyond, and an amphitheatre of mountains closing in the scene, all lighted up by a Southern sunset, which sparkled on the water, while a rich glow of light lingered on the yellow face of the cliff and on the summits of the distant mountains.

We arrived late, and stopped at a small posada just at the entrance of the town. It looked clean, and the rooms were all scrupulously whitewashed; but as to accommodation, there was nothing save the bare walls. The travellers who flocked there, it seems, were not in the habit of requiring beds, for our hostess did not possess such luxuries. We had, however, fortunately come provided with letters of introduction to the various places on our road; and one was immediately despatched to the Alcalde, with one of those loving, beseeching, flattering notes such as Spaniards love to receive, and only those who have been long in Spain know how to write. An appeal to a Spaniard's kindness and good-nature is rarely made in vain, and the worthy Alcalde soon made his appearance, offering us everything which belonged to him, and earnestly requesting us to take shelter under his roof. This we declined, for our baggage was all unpacked, and great would have been the trouble of changing our quarters; but we accepted with many thanks his offers of sending all that we required. In a short time we had beds and bedding, and every requisite for all our party, and by a proper division of labour we soon arranged everything for our evening's accommodation. We were easily satisfied; our rooms opened on a small terrace, where, in the bright starlight, we discussed, over our coffee, the pleasures of the day and the arrangements for the morrow.

The situation of Arcos was one very frequently chosen

for old Moorish towns, its isolated position offering so many advantages as a means of defence, before the invention of gunpowder rendered such natural fortifications of no avail. I took an early ramble the following morning through the town, and went into many of the churches, which were thronged with pious worshippers receiving the sacrament; an air of quiet devotion characterised them rarely to be seen in the larger capitals. The façade of the principal church is rather a good specimen of the Spanish Gothic of the fifteenth century. The town itself, climbing as it does up the hill, has narrow and tortuous streets. Nothing can be more picturesque than the lower town and the manner in which the houses are perched upon small projecting ledges of the rocks. The river is fringed with oleanders, and a wild, steep path leads up from it along the face of the cliff.

On leaving Arcos, a precipitous and stony path leads down to the river, which is forded at some little distance above the town. From here it is seen to great advantage; rising on its conical hill, it appears a perfect pyramid of snow against a sky of ultramarine. The banks of the river, far as the eye could reach, were covered with the greenest verdure, while groves of olives, relieved here and there by dense tufts of the rose-coloured cistus in its brightest bloom, presented a picture of sylvan beauty rarely to be surpassed. We soon reached a rocky hill, across which our path conducted us; and as we climbed up its parched and worn sides, we regretted the lovely valley we were leaving behind. On gaining its summit, however, what a scene lay before us! different, indeed, but far more splendid. Grand views of the distant mountains bound the prospect, while the country all around, in hill and dale, is covered with gigantic forest-trees—a sight so unusual in barren, treeless Spain, whose arid aspect seems rather to belong to the African than

the European world. But here we have indeed forest timber. Glorious trees, whose branches untouched by the hand of man, now rest upon the ground, now interlace each other, and again opening out, offer vistas of surpassing beauty. And then such dazzling sunlight in the open glades, such deep dark shadows beneath the trees. The path at one moment crossing a sandy soil, at another the luxuriant herbage forming a carpet beneath the horses' feet. And amid the forest glades wandered herds of gigantic goats, browsing on the trees and recklessly pulling at the branches which came within their reach.

Such a mixture too of foliage; the bright green of some of the oaks, contrasting with the dull, unchanging hue of the ilex and the cork, whose leaves, not presenting the brilliancy and colour of the deciduous trees, make up for the defect by retaining their verdant garb the whole year round. The strange fantastic shapes of the twisted, gnarled trunks of the cork trees; such varieties of underwood filling up the scene, the bright blossoms of the cistus, the white branches of the sweet smelling hawthorn, the common dog-roses, and hundreds of little flowers peeping among the grass, added to the beauty of the scene. For hours we thus rode on; the ground became more hilly, and we caught a distant view of Zahara, the town so famed in Moorish story from being the first taken by Mulahacen; this attack forming in reality the commencement of the war, which ended in the surrender of Granada.

A romantic glen, with a stream flowing along as clear as crystal, tempted us to a mid-day halt. Our mantas were thrown upon the ground under the shade of a huge ilex, and while our horses browsed around, our gipsy party were soon engaged in the discussion of cold fowls, a matter-of-fact employment in so sweet a spot. The

purling stream which had tempted us to rest on its banks was most deceitful, for the strong chalybeate taste of its waters rendered them unfit for drinking. We rested long, luxuriating in the refreshing shade, and listening to the songs of the muleteers as they wound through the glen, returning from that busiest scene of all in Andalucia—the fair of Ronda. On they go, sometimes walking by the side of their horses, at others resting on the packs, or perched on the top of their load, now sitting sideways, now riding along with their muskets hanging at their side, in their gay dress, with their cloaks thrown over them, always singing that same monotonous air, the "Rondeña," the words of which are generally improvised to suit the occasion, or consist of some well-known couplets which seem almost devoid of meaning; and so they pass on with the usual greeting—the "Vaya Vd. con Dios," which bids you speed upon your journey in peace and safety.

We too proceeded on our way, and stopping to ask for water at a cottage to replenish our jars, excited great astonishment in the minds of the women, who had never before seen so novel a mode of riding on horseback as ours. We went on through the same lovely scenery, the views increasing in beauty as we approached the mountains, open glades surrounded by hills, covered with forest timber, and hardly a house to be seen, only here and there a cottage, where many a princely mansion might ornament the land. But the owner of all this vast extent of property, is he not proud of it? does he not love to dwell among these glorious scenes? Far from it, he hardly knows what it resembles. It belongs to the Duke of Osuna, who has never once set his foot in Andalucia!

This immense tract of country formerly lay under the dominion of the Dukes of Arcos, the great Ponces de Leon, whose title and estates, like those of Infantado,

Benavente, and many others, are now merged in the house of Osuna. It is melancholy the manner in which the great Spanish nobles spend their time and their fortunes exclusively in Madrid; their once proud palaces in the provinces now mere heaps of ruins; their very existence almost forgotten by their owners. They hardly know the venerable monuments of antiquity which some of these feudal mansions present. Standing in the middle of the villages, surrounded by the humbler cottages of their dependents, they are fast falling to decay—unknown and unheeded. One grandee of Spain, the owner of a most interesting ruin of this stamp, on being complimented on the beauty of his ancient residence, declared he was not aware he had anything of the sort; but he was often tormented by his agent for some few hundred dollars to keep some old house which belonged to him in one of his villages in repair.

In former days, these great territorial nobles exercised an authority which made the throne tremble at the power of its vassals; and the sovereigns of Spain endeavoured by every means to diminish the influence which lords of such enormous tracts necessarily exercised over their retainers, and by degrees that power was crushed. The nobles themselves were compelled to remain about the court; they took up their abode there, and abandoned their splendid residences on their own lands, and among their own people. Wars desolated the country; what remained was destroyed by the invading armies which swept over the Peninsula; and now the former castles of the Alvas and Infantados are mouldering heaps, ruinous and deserted, and crumbling into dust. Added to this, Spaniards of the present day have a perfect indifference to the beauties of nature, or the enjoyment of country life. They cannot understand it; they never have done so; they would be bored to death away from their theatres

and paseos, and they must alter strangely before it would become a thing of Spain. Many causes have contributed to this, but naturally their character is not one which can derive pleasure from such enjoyments. Study their literature, and you will find fewer descriptions of the charms of scenery than in that of any other nation; and then the insecurity of the country is always a sufficient excuse for not remaining there. But in the meantime, the neglected condition of the villages speaks volumes of the disadvantages the people labour under from the non-residence of their landlords.

Our second day's ride was now nearly brought to a conclusion; we soon spied the little town of El Bosque nestled on the slope of a wooded hill at the entrance of a valley, through which a gentle rivulet was murmuring along. The posada was even more unpromising than the one at Arcos, but it was very characteristic of its class. The large folding-doors opening into a huge room, at one end of which is the kitchen fire, where, round the joyous flame blazing brightly on the hearth, all assemble to discuss the events of the day, or listen to the tales of their companions. This room serves for every purpose, bed-room, sitting-room, and kitchen, all in one; for here, after they have talked enough, and arranged their horses for the night, they roll themselves up in their mantas and sleep soundly. At one end were two small rooms, separated by a division, which did not reach the ceiling, and into these our party were obliged to fit, the gentlemen on one side, the ladies on the other.

Here again we were most kindly and hospitably treated by the Duke of Osuna's agent, to whom we had brought letters. He could not entertain us himself as his wife was very ill; but everything we wished for was supplied with a generosity which seemed to know no bounds. Beds, wine liqueurs, sweetmeats, even to a bottle of

French perfume, appeared in quick succession, and only added another to the many proofs of the truly kind good-nature of the Spaniards. After our long day's ride we were not sorry to retire to our rooms; but, alas! rest was impossible, we had so many industrious companions that sleep was not to be thought of. Our neighbours on the other side of the wall were as lively as ourselves, and we made up for the impossibility of sleeping by an active conversation, which must have effectually disturbed the slumbers of all beyond our quarters.

A good ramble in the fresh morning air soon made us forget the troubles of the night. We clambered up the sides of the hill to the Calvario, whence the view was indeed lovely. Below, lay the winding valley and the clustering village; above, the lofty peaks shrouded in the mists, which were gradually clearing, and as they dispersed disclosed the rich foliage which dotted the mountains to the very summit; to our right a stream came tumbling through the tangled brushwood, over-arched again by the wide-spreading forest trees.

Escorted by a young Spaniard, the son of the Duke's agent, we afterwards ascended to a hermitage, at the source of this little rivulet. We left our horses at a pretty cottage, surrounded by a garden, where roses of every hue were blooming in profusion beneath the trellised vines; the view from here is charming, extending over the vast forest lands we had been traversing, and commanding, they assured us, when the air is clear, a view of Cadiz and the sea. We proceeded on foot to the spring, accompanied by a guard of rustic beauties, who had transferred the gayest flowers of their gardens to the black tresses of their hair. The water gushes in a sparkling waterfall, through a natural arch in the rock, and dashes down the glen in a succession of miniature

cascades. It was a pretty woodland scene, and spoke well for the taste of the venerable anchorite who had selected such a spot for seclusion. We drank of the fountain, nor was the draught less acceptable to the gentlemen of the party from being presented by one of the black-eyed houris who were escorting us.

On our descent, an ominous tale of some robbery and murder which had taken place in the neighbourhood the night before was related to us in the usual style, and we received many a warning to be careful. The gentlemen of our party instantly put fresh caps on their pistols, with the proud confidence they were quite a match for all the bandits of Andalucia. Our friend's son and a shabby-looking servant, with his musket dangling at his side, apparently all ready for a fight, accompanied us a portion of the way from El Bosque to Grazalema. His father bade us adieu with many kind offers of further assistance in any way we might require, and we said farewell to El Bosque, a sweet nook, but rarely visited, and well worthy of being included in a tour through these Sierras.

Our road ascended through the valley, which gradually narrowed to a gorge between lofty and precipitous mountains. The clouds which capped the rugged peaks around, occasionally favoured us with a passing shower, and then the sun burst forth again, the varied lights and shadows adding to the beauty of the wild landscape. The narrow path led us along the side of the declivity. Below us was the narrow valley, with its silvery stream winding among cottage gardens and vineyards; above, the jagged rocks, peeping occasionally through the clouds. We descended to the rivulet, and passed Benimohammed, a small village about a league and a half from El Bosque. Here the valley branches through two openings in the hills. We proceeded for a quarter of a mile up a ravine to see the

source of the stream. It gushes forth in numerous bubbling fountains at the foot of a lofty precipice. Along the glen were many picturesque cottages, with vines and other creeping plants trained over and about them, and forming luxurious bowers; and all the girls who came out to stare at the passing strangers, and wonder what could have induced them to stray into their secluded hamlet, had their hair gaily decked with flowers.

Here our young companion bade us farewell, and returned to his own village, and we continued our progress. We soon began gradually to ascend, but the pleasure of our ride was sadly interrupted by the rain, which now commenced descending in torrents. We halted under the trees, and as we were waiting, an old venerable mountaineer came tottering down the path, "with feeble steps and slow," as though each would be his last. He counted "five dollars," according to the quaint way they have of telling their ages in this country, that is, as there are twenty reals in a dollar, he meant to convey to us that he could reckon a hundred years. He presented a striking contrast to the light step of a sturdy little fellow of nine years old, who came to seek for shelter likewise where our caravan was stopping. He was on his way over the mountain to Grazalema, and a merry, talkative little urchin he was.

Each step as we mounted higher increased in wildness, and the cold, which was making itself most disagreeably felt, told us we were attaining a considerable altitude. The road winds round the south-eastern side of the Cristobal, and the stony path is steep and precipitous, but the vegetation most luxuriant; the branches of the trees meet over head, while the ilex and the olive rise out of the thick underwood. The misty clouds at times cleared away, and disclosed occasional glimpses of the sea, with the wooded ground that lay between us and the blue ocean;

rugged cliffs and yawning precipices were laid bare for a moment, only to disappear the next in greater obscurity. We soon reached the limits of the shrubs and trees, the bare stones were only covered with the variegated lichen and a few small flowers, inhabitants of this elevated region. All looked the very picture of barrenness as we reached the culminating point of the road, when, turning to the north, we commenced descending upon Grazalema. The tall grey peaks rose on every side, but after an hour's descent, one gigantic pyramid of rock towered to our right, and beneath lay the strangely-situated town of Grazalema, perched like an eagle's nest, the houses clustering along a ridge about half-way up the mountain side.

We descended on the town, and anxiously inquired for a house in the Calle Arcos, which had been recommended to us in preference to the posada, the latter, we were told, containing more inhabitants than we should find agreeable. Nothing could exceed the sensation created by our arrival; we were decided novelties; everyone rushed out to see us, and by the time we reached the door of the house we were seeking, the streets were crowded. We saw a great many pretty faces peeping at us in every direction; ladies on horseback in the English fashion had evidently never been seen at Grazalema before. After some delay and a great deal of conversation, two necessary preliminaries to the arranging of anything in Spain, we managed to establish ourselves very comfortably. Our hostess had to vacate her own apartments, and some of our party were honoured with a room where there was a small shrine at one end, with an image of the Virgin and a lamp burning before it.

While my companions were preparing for dinner, unpacking the alforjas, or saddle-bags, &c., I ensconced myself on the balcony, to make a little sketch of the

street with the rocks soaring above the houses. This attracted the attention of the crowd more than ever; the street became impassable, and one little youngster, more enterprising than the rest, took advantage of a reja on the ground-floor, by the assistance of which he climbed up to the balcony, where I was sitting. Nothing could be more amusing than the tone of contemptuous surprise with which he exclaimed to the crowd: "Nada particular; todo blanco!" an announcement which was received by his friends with evident signs of disappointment. The excitement spread even to the upper classes of society in Grazalema, and I had an embassy from some young Señoritas, who wished to see what I had been doing, a request I could not well comply with for the best of reasons, that at that early stage there really was nothing to be seen. We were considerably surprised at finding that a rage for theatricals had found its way to this remote corner of the world, and the question whether we were going to the play excited very nearly as much surprise to us as our appearance had caused to them. We said, "yes," of course, and the manager soon arrived in person, and offered us four stalls and four entradas for the enormous sum of twelve reals—three shillings!

The theatre was next the church, and a strange place it was: evidently a stable originally; pit, boxes, gallery were all in one; the orchestra consisted of a flute, a pair of cymbals, a drum, and a guitar; the lights, a few oil lamps; the audience, what one might imagine to be the élite of Grazalema society. The play proceeded. "Maternal Affection" was the subject which was to inspire the actors and actresses, and really it was not so badly done neither; the hero went through his part admirably, and knew everybody else's as well as his own, which saved the prompter trouble. Alas! I cannot ven-

ture to describe the play, for some of our party were rather tired, and we left at the conclusion of the first act. The little we did see was highly flattering to our national vanity, for, curiously enough, half the characters were English, and their conduct in deeds of generosity, valour, and all sorts of good qualities displayed the character of John Bull in a most favourable light.

The precipitous streets of Grazalema are most picturesque, with charming fountains here and there, round which the women were grouped in their gay-coloured petticoats and "mantillas de tiro," as the head-dress of the humbler class is called. One of these fountains was exceedingly pretty, of a fine white stone tinged with the mellow hue of time, the water gushing out of the mouths of ever so many quaint looking masks, and the whole surmounted by a pediment, and a simple stone cross. The vines clamber over the roofs of the adjacent houses, which again are backed by the odd-shaped rocks, grey, cold and barren. A steep descent leads across the bed of a torrent towards the cemetery, situated in a most charming position. Shrubs struggle out from among the rocks in every direction, and a few tall cypresses appropriately mark the spot. There are niches as usual to receive the bodies, and a very neat chapel attached to the cemetery. The view of Grazalema from this point is very grand, with its houses nestling against the-hill side; some hanging over the precipice to the left; and the tall gigantic peak, which they call El Peñon Grande, and round the base of which we passed on our arrival, towering behind.

To the right rises the Cristobal, three thousand three hundred feet high;* but still capped by clouds, from which

* The Cristobal is the loftiest peak of this range, and has received the name of this favourite saint, from being the first high land visible to mariners as they approach the shore—a good omen to look upon St. Christopher in any form.

GRAZALEMA.

it appears to be seldom free; in fact, from what the people say, fine days here must be rather the exception than the rule, for it seems to be almost always raining. A whole mob of people followed us from the town. Their astonishment knew no bounds when my drawing-umbrella was unfurled, and no expostulation on our part could induce them to return to the bosom of their families. They continued to gaze, and I continued drawing, my companions assuring them they might as well disperse, there was nothing to see, for we were only men and women like themselves. We moved on to a more romantic spot, to take a general view of the town and precipice, and the scene now became rather curious. The people were perched in every direction on the rocks, gazing at us from every corner whence they could command a view of the strangers. In the most out-of-the-way villages of the East, I doubt if travellers were ever objects of greater curiosity. It became so annoying at last, that we were obliged to send for a "guardia," who kept them in some degree of order. Great was our disappointment at not being able to ascend the Cristobal, but the clouds were still heavy on its summit, and it seemed almost hopeless waiting for a fine day at Grazalema; so we gave up the attempt, and prepared to continue on our way to Ronda.

The scenery once more became wooded; the gaunt forms of the fantastic cork-trees rose around us, some still protected by their curious bark, others stripped of their profitable covering. All around and about us seemed a wilderness of wood and mountain, tall peaks and deep-sheltered valleys; here and there, an old Moorish castle crowning some giddy height with a yawning precipice beneath; gorges through which gurgled tiny rivulets, grey, towering cliffs rearing their heads in sterile grandeur, the intervening declivities covered with vast tracts of the

gum-cistus, whose large white flowers glittered in the sun, while the strong perfume from their branches filled the air.

But the aspect of the country changed before reaching Ronda. The vegetation gradually ceased; all became stony and barren, bare cliffs rose in wild, fantastic shapes, and we came at length, as it were, to the edge of the chain along which we had been travelling; a sudden and a steep descent led down to the valley beneath, and a vast panorama of arid mountains and verdant valleys was spread out before us. The wild aspect of the whole reminded me forcibly of the hill country of Judea. In the middle of the picture, but hardly distinguishable from the grey peaks around, lay the town of Ronda; from this distance giving the traveller no idea of its singular position. We walked down the slippery descent, and crossing a clear brook, entered upon the richly cultivated vale, full of trees, producing fruit of every description.

A weary road, up a stony, sandy hill, offers a very unpromising entrance to the town of Ronda; and the horses could hardly keep their footing on the slippery pavement of the first street we crossed, which consisted of the natural flags left bare and polished. The town was white and clean. We crossed the bridge over the Tajo, —that wondrous chasm which forms the glory and the pride of Ronda—and which bursts so unexpectedly on the traveller, as he rides through the town. We established ourselves at a very comfortable Casa de Pupilos, kept by two or three old ladies, in the Calle San Pedro, the back windows of the house overhanging the ravine itself.

We thus obtained almost our first view of it by moonlight, and exquisite it was, as the moon rose high above us, lighting up some projecting rock with its silver beams, the dark mass of the daring bridge which spans the gorge,

reposing in shadow on our right, and far, far below, a silver thread, dancing in the moonlight, wandering on its course amid rocks and trees and houses, the lights in the distant windows appearing like glow-worms from that towering height. In the distance the softened outlines of the rocky pinnacles we had been passing, bounded the horizon. All seemed strange and undefined, and in vain we sought to obtain a clear idea of the scene on which we were gazing.

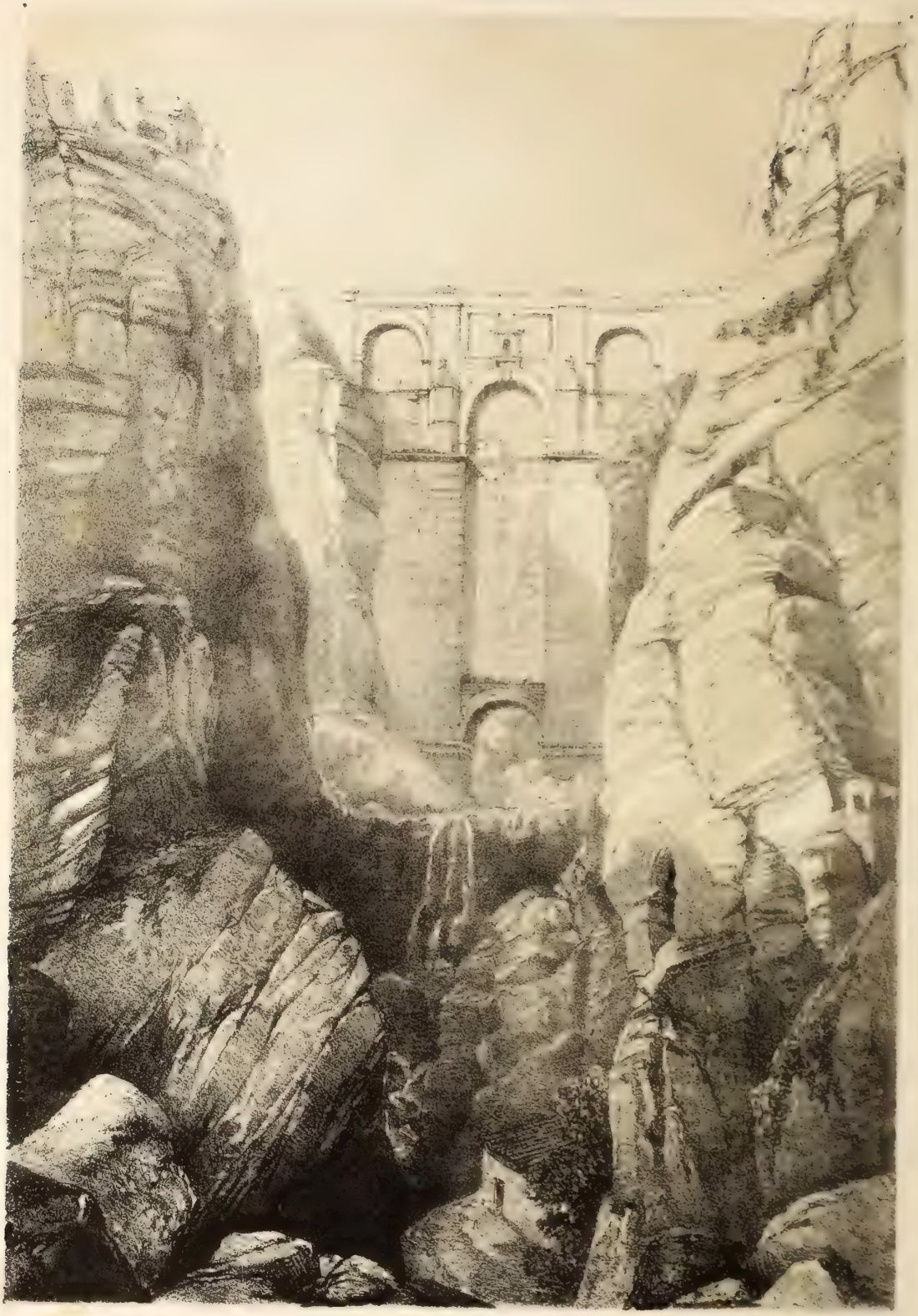
PATIO IN RONDA

CHAPTER X.

"While they were in this conversation they were overtaken by a gentleman mounted on a very fine flea-bitten mare. He had on a riding-coat of fine green cloth faced with murry-coloured velvet, a hunter's cap of the same. The furniture of his horse was country-like and after the jennet fashion. As he came up with them, he very civilly saluted them, and clapping spurs to his mare began to leave them behind him. Thereupon, Don Quixote called to him. "Sir," cried he, "if you are not in too much haste we shall be glad of the favour of your company, so far as you travel this road."—Don Quixote.

RONDA—THE TAJO—MOORISH HOUSES—ALAMEDA—CASA DEL REY MORO—CHURCHES—CUEVA DEL GATO—A TRAVELLING COMPANION—TEBA—CAMPILLOS—THE SALT LAKE—ANTEQUERA—PLEASANT QUARTERS—THE CASTLE—ARCO DE LOS GIGANTES—ROMAN ANTIQUITIES—BALLAD STORIES—MIRACULOUS IMAGE—A FIX—DIPLOMACY—CUEVA DEL MENGAL—AFFINITY BETWEEN CELTIC REMAINS IN SPAIN AND IRELAND—OUR LAST NIGHT AT ANTEQUERA—GHOSTS—DEPARTURE—PENA DE LOS ENAMORADOS—ARCHIDONA—HER MAJESTY'S MAIL—LOJA—ARRIVAL AT GRANADA.

Ronda is, indeed, one of those places which stands



alone. I know of nothing to which it can be compared. Some parts of its ravine, near the old bridge, reminded me of the chasm through which you enter Petra; but then there can be no comparison between the silent city of the Desert and the gorge of Ronda, overflowing with life and noisy industry. The river—the Rio Verde, so famed in Moorish story—winds through pleasant, undulating ground to the north of the town, when it suddenly finds, as it were, a lofty mountain thrown across its course; impatient of the obstacle, it has worn a way through the cliff, forming a rent, through which it pierces; gigantic fragments of rock impeding its onward course, while the sides rise precipitously some three hundred feet; a few straggling prickly pears growing near their summits, and many an old and picturesque house overhanging them. And on it goes until the gorge itself is spanned by a giant bridge, beneath which it flows; here the ground falls some three hundred feet, and down goes the stream, dashing, foaming in three successive waterfalls of surpassing beauty, and over huge boulders, which are scattered here and there: on one side the lofty cliffs still rise, and on the other a succession of little terraces, whereon mills are clustered, one below the other, whose busy labours give life and animation to the scene as they catch the water each in turn from the bounding river, which at length arrives in the valley, and flows on in peace and quietness to fertilize the fruitful orchards which clothe its banks.

Looking down from the bridge, it is grand beyond description, and equally beautiful is the view looking up from the lowest mill; cottage rises above cottage, the sparkling streams descending to each, glittering amid a mass of vegetation which this abundance of water causes to spring forth luxuriantly; while the main stream

descends like a silver thread amid this confusion of trees and stones. Wild brambles intertwine their branches, the light fronds of the water-loving ferns droop over the tiny fissures, ivy climbs along the walls, and a thousand brilliant flowers, some not naturally dwellers in such mountainous districts, tempted by the force of the sun against these rocky walls, put forth many-coloured blossoms to add fresh beauties to this unrivalled spot. And above, appearing from here almost like a speck, is seen the bridge, nearly three hundred feet in height, joining cliff to cliff, the white houses of the miniature town appearing against the azure sky. It is, indeed, a wondrous scene, and one of which neither pen nor pencil can convey any just idea. The artist may here find plenty of occupation, and while away many a pleasant day in the Tajo; every mill is a picture, and the whole so extensive, that the eye can scarcely embrace its varied beauties. At one place the water is conveyed in an "acequia" along the face of the hill, and the only means to pass is along its edge with a precipice below; here crowds of women may be seen washing in their bright red petticoats, neat white boddice, their heads covered with the usual coloured kerchief, and chattering away as only Spanish washerwomen can chatter. Peculiar as the scene is, and beautiful beyond description, yet when you have viewed and studied the Tajo, you have seen all that Ronda presents.

The lofty bridge of solid masonry, which connects the modern with the old Moorish town, was built in the last century, but the older one of San Miguel at the other end of the gorge is far more picturesque. A rickety old staircase leads down from a house adjoining it to the bottom of the cliff; its wooden steps affording rather an uncertain footing, while its trembling balustrade threatens to give way at the slightest touch. There are many

picturesque bits in Ronda, small gateways with their little chapels over the arch; shrines where the wayfarer might pause, to pray that no harm should befal him on his journey ere he leaves the town, or kneel upon his arrival to return thanks for the dangers he has escaped. There are likewise numerous fountains surmounted with their white crosses, round which throng ever-varying groups of water-carriers and thirsty animals, eager for the refreshing draught. Several Moorish houses still remain, their patios all intertwined with vines and roses. One we went to see could boast of some rather fine ceilings, their beams still covered with painted arabesques. Its present owner was an amateur artist; alas for the land of Murillo! his paintings were strange productions, but he thought himself a man of taste, and was proud of his house, a quality which would cover a multitude of sins, so rare is it to see anything of bygone days valued in this land.

He had a large collection of Roman copper coins, which still pass current for "ochavos," and informed some of our party of a Roman altar in the patio of a friend of his, which they went off to inspect. They found it used for the covering of a well in the patio; it was hollow, allowing the rope to run through. It was formed of white marble, of a bell-like shape, the top being turned to the earth as the reversed inscription indicated, the words, "Martis Altare" being clearly legible. While they were studying Roman antiquities, I sketched the little patio, surrounded by a group of noisy children. Their attention was diverted from me by the arrival of the parish priest, who sat himself down amongst them, and was soon overpowered by offers of "dulces," and cakes of every description.

The streets of the modern town of Ronda are straight and clean, with the peculiarity of the rejas projecting into

the street, with stone bases and small projecting roofs, all whitewashed, which, combined with quantities of flowers within the rejas, gives a remarkably fresh appearance to the town. The Alameda hangs over the cliff as it sweeps round the Tajo, and commands a panorama of the distant mountains, crowned by the Cristobal, almost unique in beauty. The market-place, overhanging the Tajo, above the bridge, is scrupulously clean, and filled with the most delicious fruit, the orchards near Ronda being famed throughout Andalucia for their produce. One remarkable old spot is worthy of a visit, the Casa del Rey Moro; the house itself has no traces of antiquity, but you descend to the bed of the river by means of stairs cut in the rock, and in the descent pass some large rooms, all hollowed out of the solid cliff, looking as if they had been intended for dungeons. A small doorway opens on the river, but the cliffs descend so perpendicularly, that they only allow room for the torrent to rush between them, effectually stopping all egress in that direction.

Ronda is famed for being the head-quarters of all the smugglers who used formerly to find the neighbourhood of Gibraltar convenient; but they and their trade are both diminishing Still the fair of Ronda and the throng of people who flock to it are talked of as one of the sights of Andalucia, and its bull-fights are far-famed. The population seem rather disposed to be quarrelsome, if one may judge from the multiplicity of crosses which ornament the walls of the houses, recording with the usual inscription the tragic fate of some victim to the "narvaja." The principal church is said to have been a mosque, but there is small appearance of Moorish work about it now; it is, however, evidently a patched-up building, for on entering, it appears to have two high altars, and you hardly know which is the principal one. Of the castle there is but little left. Ronda was once the key to

these mountain fastnesses, whence its inhabitants could issue forth to sweep the rich valleys towards Cadiz, and retreat again undisturbed to their stronghold. It was taken by Ferdinand in 1485, when its governor, the bold Hamet el Zegri, was absent; he who afterwards so gallantly defended the Gibralfaro at Málaga. He had gone to the relief of Coin; and when he returned, he found his eagle's nest was already in the hands of the Christians.

A charming expedition may be made from Ronda to the Cueva del Gato, a cavern about two leagues distant. We left the town by the same bleak, dreary path by which we entered it, descending the valley to the left, and skirted the stream for some time with a steep mountain on our right. A sharp turn brought us suddenly in front of the cavern, from which a river was rushing forth out of the very depths of the mountain: the entrance, like a lofty porch, is in the face of a perpendicular cliff, and unapproachable except by climbing over rather precipitous rocks. The stately flower of the acanthus rose in all the crevices, its classic leaves falling over the grey stones, and the wild vine and fig-tree entwined their branches across the entrance. We penetrated about a hundred yards, the water bounding along beneath and around us, the footing in many places being far from secure. The peasants say it continues for the space of a league into the mountain; stalactites hang from the lofty roof, and the whole presents a very grand and wild appearance. From the furthest point to which we penetrated, I sat down to sketch the entrance; and we were joined by a fine-looking peasant, who entered into conversation with us, and told us many tales of the way those caves had served the people for refuge in times of war. He was a manly-looking fellow, and talked with that ease and independence, yet almost chivalrous courtesy, which

characterise these Andalucian peasants. The stream which gushes forth from this cavern flows into the one whose course we had been following; united, they receive another tributary, and then, as our companion informed us, disappear in the earth about a league to the southward; but where they issue forth again was more than he could tell.

The day for our departure had arrived; we bade adieu to Ronda, and found ourselves once more on the road. The arches of a Moorish aqueduct, now all in ruins, were scattered along the side of our path. An uninteresting ride lay before us, tame, and flat, and monotonous after the superb forest scenery through which we had passed between Grazalema and Ronda. But we were enlivened by the society of a very Quixotic-looking Spaniard, who was travelling in the same direction. He passed us at first, but we soon joined forces, and became great friends, in that frank and easy manner with which one makes acquaintance in such unfrequented places. In the wild mountain tract and desert fastness, all soon become friends, and even our own countrymen contrive in these uncivilized districts to commence conversation without the formality of an introduction. Our friend's costume was singular, large leather sleeves laced on to a very shabby, faded green velvet jacket, crowned, alas! by a wide-awake, instead of a "sombrero calañes," his cloak strapped on in front to his saddle, his double-barelled gun hanging at the flank of his powerful grey charger, and an armed servant following on a mule with his luggage.

He jogged on leisurely by our side, and the bleak and barren road was rendered shorter and less tiresome by his anecdotes of Ronda and its vicinity.

We made our mid-day halt in a venta on the road-side, where Don Rafael partook of our fare, and seemed

astonished at the exploits which were performed in the eating line by some of the party; how different to the simple gazpacho with which a Spaniard would refresh and cool himself during the heat of a summer sun! That cooling repast of which people, who think its contents must make so uninviting a whole, little know the luxury until they have divested themselves of their prejudices, and felt how grateful it is when exhausted by the heat of a Southern sun. The castle-crowned heights of Teba now appeared on a barren hill in the valley before us. Our friend parted from us here, never, probably, to meet again; and such is travelling, knowing people, joining in some far-away place, becoming friends, and sharing in all the varying circumstances that such a novel mode of life is sure to offer, and then comes the leave-taking, and you separate, to see and hear no more of those with whom you have passed many a merry hour.

The town of Teba was hardly visible, but a mountain road led along a gorge ascending to it. The castle was often taken and retaken in the Moorish wars, and on one remarkable occasion it was the scene of a most enterprising action of Rodrigo Narvaez, the chivalrous governor of Antequera. After that place had been conquered, a truce was agreed upon for a certain time, when Teba was in the hands of the Christians. The day before the truce was to commence, the Moors attacked, and took it by storm. Narvaez hearing of this the same night, and feeling that the enemy had taken advantage of his not having it in his power to recover it, the truce commencing next day, instantly sallied forth from Antequera with a few chosen followers. In the middle of the night he arrived before Teba, fell upon the unsuspecting garrison, who surrendered immediately, and when the day dawned on which the truce was to commence, Teba was once more in the hands of the Christians.

Soon the aspect of the country changed; again the road crossed verdant meadows, and wound through olive-crowned hills, and a charming ride in the soft moonlight brought us to Campillos, where we found a large and clean posada. This is a small village, with a straight, wide street, and a large church remarkably well kept. The road thence to Antequera was in first-rate order; but the heat was intense, and we were nearly roasted crossing those wide, unsheltered plains, covered with waving crops of the black-bearded wheat. The celebrated salt lake lay in that burning expanse, like a vast sheet of ice, round the edges of which the snow lay thick and heavy. This lake is a source of great profit, and is nourished by two streams highly impregnated with salt, which take their rise in the mountains near Antequera. This salt has always been highly prized, from its purity and the ease with which it is collected, and was much valued by the Moors, who trafficked in it largely.

The ride on was broiling. The bold crag of the Peña de los Enamorados formed a conspicuous object in the distance, but the projecting hilly ground concealed Antequera from our view, until we had approached nearly to it. The situation is very beautiful; the town backed by its old Moorish castle, and the grey rugged mountain peaks behind. We took refuge in the Posada de la Castaña, which I would commend to all future travellers, as one studiously to be avoided, although I cannot promise that the town affords a better. The court-yard presented the usual animated appearance, the muleteers arriving and departing, while some were taking a siesta on the benches, rolled up in their gay-coloured mantas.

The rooms looked clean as usual, but appearances were deceptive, and the slumbers of some of our party were considerably disturbed by the appearance of most unwelcome companions. Not light, active creatures, which hop

about, never resting for a moment; but a steady and determined array of slow-creeping things, advancing gradually and tranquilly. They paid however dearly for their temerity, they little knew the spirit they had aroused; they were more persecuted than persecuting, at least, if the reports of individual prowess could be relied on, for a fair member of our party in the morning announced that eighty head, to her own score, had perished in the conflict.

The eating was worse, if possible, than the sleeping accommodation. Oil and garlic seemed to be the staple products of Antequera, and garnished the dishes to an extent rare even in this land, rendering still more unpalatable the tough, fibrous chickens. The despair of some of the party reached the highest pitch, when it was discovered that not even a drop of drinkable wine could be procured. Generally speaking, good wine is difficult to be obtained in the interior; as the consumption is small, but little care is bestowed on the manufacture of it, while the absence of all demand for the better qualities, and the difficulties of transport, render it almost impossible to procure the produce of Malaga or Xeres at any price.

Antequera, though evidently not offering much attraction to the lover of good fare, and not likely to tempt the traveller to a long residence from the comfort of its inns, is a most interesting town, both to the antiquarian and lover of the picturesque. The vega too was the scene of many a gallant rencontre between Moor and Christian, and some of the most romantic adventures of those days occurred under the shadow of the Lovers' Rock, the bold and lofty Peña de los Enamorados. The town is clustered round the hill, on which stands the dilapidated castle. A steep ascent leads up to an old arch—the Arco de los Gigantes—which admits you within the enclosure guarded

by the now ruined walls. This arch has a venerable appearance, which might induce one at a first and hasty glance to consider it some relic of Roman days, covered as it is with Latin inscriptions of great antiquity; but it only dates from 1585, when it was erected by the Ayuntamiento, who wisely turned it to account as a means of preserving some of the vast number of Roman inscriptions discovered in the neighbourhood. It would be well, if some of the corporations in Spain in these days, would take the same laudable interest in preserving the precious monuments existing in their towns.

The view, looking through this arch down upon the town, is lovely; it makes such a pretty frame,* enclosing the quaint red tower of the Collegiate Church, which formed the principal object in the picture. Above are the ruined walls of the old Moorish fortress, with its tower now converted into a belfry. But little of it remains; the view, however, well repays the ascent. The town in front, with the luxuriant vega beyond; rising in the centre the fine crag, which strikes the eye from every point in this neighbourhood; the lofty mountains so close behind, their jagged peaks of cold, grey stone, and the wild and barren ravines which intersect them; the mountain torrent dashing over its stony bed, the tall masses of many ruined convents, and the salt lake glittering in the distance.

Antequera, like many other Spanish towns, claims Tubal as its founder, although one of its historians has the candour to admit that it is difficult to authenticate the fact of his ever having actually resided there. But the curious remnants of an earlier people, who preceded the Romans, may be seen in a chambered mound, which forms so peculiar a feature of interest to the antiquarian; while

* See Title-page.

the enormous number of Latin inscriptions prove it to have been a city of some importance in the days of the Romans. There seem to have been several towns congregated in this neighbourhood: at a "cortijo" in the neighbourhood, inscriptions of the Roman Singilia have been discovered, besides a great number of sepulchres; and in the course of cultivating the land, labourers are continually meeting with some trace of Roman antiquities.

Antequera has been the scene of stories told in many an ancient ballad; and who can help feeling an interest in recalling all those tales of chivalrous courtesy and knightly honour, in which Moor and Christian sought to rival and outvie each other? All who have read of these will recollect the generous conduct of Rodrigo Narvaez, when he took a Moorish chieftain prisoner; how, when he heard the tale of his sorrows, and that he was on his way to carry off a noble lady of Coin, whose affections he had gained, he allowed him to proceed upon his way, and claim his bride, upon the condition that he should return, and yield himself once more a prisoner: and he did return, accompanied by his fair Jarifa. Touched by this honourable conduct of the Moor, Narvaez gave him his liberty, and even commended him to the especial care of the King of Granada, imploring forgiveness for the lovers. And then the story of Don Tello, he who went forth before the siege commenced, to challenge to single combat some Moslem warrior; but none would venture to the encounter until Arabella, the bold Alcalde of Ronda, who happened to be within the fortress, took up the challenge, and left the town to fight the Christian. The Moor was defeated; and Don Tello, when he saw his adversary severely wounded and at his mercy, instead of killing him, took out bandages and ointments to cure him of his wounds. At the sight of their comrade's defeat, his friends sallied

forth to avenge it; but when Arabella told them how the Christian was his friend, and how, having met him in single combat, he had been vanquished and made his prisoner, he implored them to treat him as so gallant an enemy deserved, and escort him into the town; where Don Tello remained, honoured by his enemies, until such time as the wounds of the Alcalde of Ronda were cured. Such are the incidents immortalized in the ballad poetry of Spain, full of such strange courtesy, of such chivalrous traits, which show how even the barbarity of those deadly wars was tempered by conduct which would do honour to the highest civilization.

On the Castle hill is the old church of Santa Maria, one of the first parishes established on the taking of the town; it was considerably enlarged and embellished about the beginning of the sixteenth century, when it was made into a Collegiate Church; it has a most beautiful "artesonado" ceiling. Of the Church of San Salvador no vestige now remains; this was the original mosque consecrated by the Archbishop of Santiago in the presence of the Infante Fernando, and here the first Te Deum was sung in gratitude for the triumph which the Christian arms had obtained. Injured by the French, it was allowed to fall to ruin, like everything else—the same story always. Antequera is full of deserted convents, gradually falling to decay. In proportion to the number of these establishments formerly existing, is the air of desolation which now pervades Spanish towns. There are plenty of nunneries still standing, their latticed windows giving a gloomy appearance to the streets where they rear their prison-like walls.

Even the convent of Our Lady de los Remedios is rapidly decaying. This boasts of being one of the finest churches in the town. It was erected in honour of an image which appeared to the good people of Antequera,

to make amends for the loss of stolen goods, in this wise. A devout father, who had founded a convent in the neighbourhood of the city in 1519, was anxiously seeking for an image of the Virgin, to whom he had dedicated his retreat, when a neighbouring shepherd supplied him with one of considerable beauty, which he kept carefully treasured within his house. But the shepherd concealed the fact that he had stolen it from a hermitage at Villaviciosa, in the mountains near Cordoba: a wily theft; for, having heard that it had been originally carried away from a village in Portugal by another shepherd, who had benefitted greatly in his worldly affairs so long as the image remained in his possession, he wisely argued, a second edition of such a theft might benefit him likewise. Moved, however, by the bribes and entreaties of the good Father Martin, he made it over to him, and it proved the joy and delight of the worthy friar's heart for two years, until, on one unlucky day, a Cordobese happened to stray into his church, and recognised the image whose disappearance had caused so much woe in Villaviciosa. Proofs of its identity were produced; it was given up, and restored to its rightful owners. Great was the sorrow of the holy father; but his grief was of short duration, for one fine morning a loud knocking was heard at the convent door, and on opening it, a knight appeared, clothed in white, upon a fiery charger, clasping an image to his heart, which he delivered into the hands of the enraptured friar, saying: "Behold your remedy, and that of Antequera." The present was received with gratitude, but the knight immediately vanished; and it was forthwith concluded that Santiago himself must have been the donor of so celestial a gift. The image was placed upon the altar, and some years afterwards removed to the convent, where it still excites the admiration of the pious under the name of N^ra^ Señora de los Remedios.

Our curiosity had been excited by the description we had heard of what was called a Druidic temple, a chambered mound, which existed somewhere in the neighbourhood, and which, from the account given of it, would seem to resemble in its construction the same mysterious remains of antiquity so common in our own island. But, alas! there were not any guides in Antequera to lead the traveller at once to the object of his search; and as we had forgotten the name by which the cave was generally known, we had a pleasant prospect of leaving the town without attaining the principal object of our visit. We made no end of inquiries; we were told of numerous caves, but they were not fashioned by the hand of man, and did not suit our purpose. We might as well have sought the wondrous cave of the Albarizas, that subterranean gallery which, leading from the Castle to the Vega, enabled the Moslems, during the siege of Antequera, to hold communication with their brethren of Granada, their messengers being thus enabled to emerge into the Vega beyond the Christian camp:

"De Antequera sale el Moro,
Por la cueva de las Albarizas."

But Moorish antiquities were things of yesterday, compared to what we were seeking. We wished to penetrate still further into the lapse of ages. At length, a civil note was written to the Alcalde—a true Spanish production, telling him how we had come to visit this land of Maria Santissima, how at every step we had become more and more lost in admiration of its beauties, and the charms of its inhabitants, until we had reached the culminating point of our enchantment in "la muy noble ciudad de Antequera;" and now we were anxiously seeking a monument which proved that Antequera was older than any other city of the known world; and we told him how

some of our party, who were deep in such ancient lore, had come from the shores of a distant island to study her antiquities.

How could such a note fail to provoke an answer? Spanish pride had been flattered, and Spanish kindness and civility are ever ready to return thanks for the homage paid them. The Alcalde called; the cave and everything else was at our disposal—only, he did not know anything about it, or where to find it. He knew a pamphlet had been written on the subject; he would send it to us, and send us a guide who would probably know something about it. Nothing could exceed his courtesy; but his visit did not leave us much the wiser. Our guide arrived; the grand mystery was solved, and after all our inquiries we were on our way to the "Cueva del Mengal," the name by which it is known among the people.

This singular monument is, I believe, the only one of its kind as yet discovered in the Peninsula. Its striking similarity in dimensions and design to those covered mounds which exist in Ireland, and which of late years have attracted so much attention, together with the fact that no mention of it has hitherto been made in any English work—at least, as far as I am aware—induces me to give here a detailed description of its size and proportions, and which I am enabled to do from accurate measurements made on the spot by one of the gentlemen of our party.

Although its existence would seem to have been known from time immemorial to the people in this neighbourhood, by the name of the Cave of Mengal, yet no reference or allusion to it is found in any Spanish book upon the topography or antiquities of the country, until a small pamphlet was published upon the subject, in the year 1847, by a Senor Mitjana of Malaga. In this little tract the author begins by giving a brief history of the primi-

tive inhabitants of the country. According to him, and the authorities he cites, the Celtiberians, or Celts, after crossing the Pyrenees, occupied Navarre, Aragon, Galicia, Portugal, Old and New Castile, La Mancha, Estramadura, the greater part of Andalucia, and the Serrania of Ronda, from Gibraltar to Antequera. Here they bordered on another tribe, called the Turduli, who stretched over the districts of Antequera, Archidona, Granada, Cordoba, and Jaen, and by them the city of Antequera was founded two thousand years before the Christian era. The former were devoted to pastoral pursuits; they gloried in war; they formed the nerve and sinew of the nation; by them, long subsequently, was the victory of Cannæ decided; and Scipio more than once defeated.

The Turduli were versed in agriculture and the first rudiments of the arts; they dwelt in houses built of kneaded clay, and thatched with straw and reeds, for he states, on the authority of Pliny, that the ancient Spaniards knew nothing of working with stone and mortar, until taught it by the Carthaginians. They had letters, too, and a literature of their own, and so also had the Celts; and he says that Strabo states that they had very ancient books and poems, and laws written in verse, handed down from the remotest antiquity. They worshipped the moon and sacred stones, and various other idols, and erected for their worship temples of huge rough stones placed on end without cement, sometimes covered in, and often in large open circles. He finishes his introduction by giving an account of the religion of the Druids, according to the opinions generally received, and so common in other countries, but the relation of which would seem to have, in Spain, all the charm of novelty. He then proceeds to say, that in the month of April 1842, his attention having been drawn to this place, he was at once struck by its appearance; although it

was then choked up with clay and rubbish, he was able in the course of numerous visits to ascertain its real character, and at last succeeded, though with difficulty, in convincing the owner of the soil, and the neighbouring peasants, that it was not "the work of chance," and so got their assistance in clearing out the place, and disclosing to the world what he designates a Druidic temple.

However superficial and inaccurate Signor Mitjana's views and conclusions, in some respects, may be (though I do not venture to give any opinion on the subject), still very much is due to that gentleman for what he has done; and for having been the first of his countrymen to draw attention to this most curious relic of far-distant ages. Whether it was erected for a temple or a tumulus, or for both, I leave to the learned to decide, and shall content myself with describing the place itself, as we found it on the 3rd of June, 1852.

About a quarter of a mile to the eastward of the town, on the road to Archidona, are three small conical hills, from sixty to eighty feet in height, remarkable for the regularity of their outline, and covered with olive-trees. On ascending the one nearest the town, and close to its summit, you find yourself opposite to the entrance of the cave. It presents a perfect porch, symmetrical in shape, but composed of rough stones of gigantic magnitude. This porch is an oblong square, seventeen feet in depth, nine wide, and eight high. Its roof is composed of a single stone, nearly fifteen feet square, and over four feet high, and calculated by Signor Mitjana (who was an architect) to weigh four thousand six hundred and eight arrobas, or above fifty-one tons of our measurement. This roof is supported by six stones—three on each side, standing on end, sunk from three to four feet in the earth, and having an average breadth of four and a half feet. At

the end of the porch, two jutting stones approach within seven feet of each other; and here an inner chamber lies before you, but of a different form. It is oval, and of considerably larger dimensions, being fifty-four feet in length. Its sides, also composed of upright stones, seven upon each side, gradually expand from the entrance to a width of seventeen feet in the centre, and then gradually narrow again to a width of twelve feet, where one huge stone blocks up the extremity, and gives it the form of an oval, flattened at the ends.

The roof of this inner chamber, which is ten feet from the floor, is composed of only four stones, stretching from side to side, and each of larger dimensions than that which covers the porch. The one farthest from the entrance is the largest, being a square of twenty-three feet, and four feet thick, and estimated to weigh the enormous amount of one hundred and twenty tons—the five stones, forming the entire roof, amounting to above three hundred and seventy-five tons in all. In addition to the sides and the single stone at the extremity, the roof of the inner chamber is supported also by three pillar-stones, standing along the centre; and which, as they are not quite perpendicular, would seem to have been subsequently introduced as additional supports to the roof. They are placed in such a manner under the points of junction of the stones above, so that each contributes support to two of them. These pillar-stones are rude and rough on their surface, of an irregular, quadrilateral shape, and not of equal dimensions; the one nearest the entrance being only eight feet in circumference, while the innermost measures fourteen feet. In the roof of the inner chamber the second stone from the entrance appears to have been cracked in two, or else, perhaps, from inability to procure all of such gigantic dimensions, the builders fitted two smaller ones to serve their purpose. The accompanying

sketch represents the cave as viewed from the inner extremity.

INTERIOR OF THE CAVE.

All these stones on the outside, wherever they are visible, are misshaped and irregular; but, on the inside, they are flat and even, without being smooth. They do not appear to have been punched or chiselled in any way, but present that rough, yet flat surface, which can frequently be seen in stones in their natural state. There are no traces upon them of chisel marks, nor any lines whatever; nor are there around the base of the hill, as is generally the case in Ireland, any remains of a stone circle. The structure is just under the surface of the summit, the conical shape of which is still preserved.

In length the cave measures seventy-one feet, and lies due east and west: the entrance faces eastward, and looks towards the other two similar hills; and beyond them again, at almost the distance of a league, rises

abruptly from the plain the Peña de los Enamorados, which, from here, presents its most picturesque appearance. Signor Mitjana, in searching for bones, weapons, or other remains, and perhaps for other chambers deeper in the hill, caused a shaft to be sunk in the interior, between the third pillar and the extremity, but discovered nothing; and, to give light to his workmen, broke out at the end a large hole, four or five feet square, which considerably impairs the effect and uniformity of the place. Fortunately, however, it does admit the light, or else a visit to the cave might be attended with dangerous results, for as the shaft is still open, five feet wide and forty-three feet deep, and the earth loose and sloping at the mouth, an unwary visitor could hardly escape being precipitated into it.

It is generally believed that the adjoining mounds contain monuments of a similar description, and it is highly probable that such is the case; but as yet no one has had enterprise enough to undertake such a research. These hills are not entirely artificial, like those on the banks of the Boyne; but for the most part consist of dark sandstone in its natural condition, and which probably was cut and pared away till it assumed the shape required. Among the many other points of resemblance, however, it is ascertained, that all these enormous stones were brought from a distance, none of the kind being found in the immediate locality, and the remains of a quarry of the same kind still existing about half a mile off, on the hill of the Calvario. How were these stupendous masses quarried, and moved, and lifted, and arranged with order and precision four thousand years ago? Who were those people? For what did they rear this singular structure? Strange remnant of the past! Alone in this mountain land, speaking of generations of men of might and skill, who lived and passed away before the legions of Carthage

or of Rome were heard of in the world. Enveloped in the haze of antiquity, its uses still undecided and unascertained, baffling the most patient research—an object from age to age for learning to theorize on! But there it stands, in its rude but Titanic workmanship, surviving all the splendid triumphs of architecture: the stupendous edifices of Rome, the fairy tracery of Moorish halls, the temples of Christian art have crumbled into ruin, the ploughshare has passed over their foundations, or the wild vine twines around their mouldering walls, but the Druids' cave still stands, as doubtless it stood, a thousand years before Rome was founded.*

* As I have already remarked, the similarity between this monument and those existing in Ireland, is too striking not to invest them with a peculiar and mutual interest. On this account, it appeared to me, that it might not be unacceptable to the reader, who may have never seen or read anything of those I referred to, to give some description of them, and show in what the resemblance consists. This can best be done by giving a few extracts from an interesting book, which was published not long since, on the picturesque scenery of the Boyne.(a)

Dr. Wilde devotes the eighth chapter of his book to a description of those mounds on the banks of the Boyne, which have as yet been explored, and also to tracing, from the records of the country, their true history, and the uses for which they were constructed. From this chapter I select the following:

"About a mile and a half below Slane, and extending along the northern bank of the river, we meet the great Irish cemetery to which we have just alluded. This consists chiefly of a number of sepulchral mounds, or barrows, varying in magnitude, and occupying a space of about a mile in breadth, northward of the river's banks, and stretching from Knowth to the confines of Netterville demesne, over a distance of nearly three miles. In this space we find no less than seventeen sepulchral barrows, some of these—the smaller ones—situated in the green pasture lands, which form the immediate valley of the Boyne, while the three of greatest magnitude are placed on the summit of the ridge which bounds this valley upon the left bank, and a few others are

(a) "The Beauties of the Boyne and Blackwater," by William R. Wilde. McGlashan, Dublin: Orr and Co., London.

But we must say farewell to Antequera; and leaving it by the Cueva del Mengal, which lies on the road to

to be found at Monck-Newtown, beyond the brow of the hill towards Louth, making upwards of twenty in all.

"The three great mounds of Knowth, New Grange, and Dowth, principally demand attention, not only on account of their magnitude, but because one of them has remained open for some years, and a third has been lately examined. Each of these is situated within view of the other, and at about a mile distant, and consists at first sight of a great natural hill, rising abruptly from the surrounding surface; and this idea is rather strengthened by the circumstance of one of these having become covered with wood, and another having, until lately, borne on its summit a modern stone building. An eye practised to the forms of ancient structures at once recognises these vast pyramids as the work of man, and a closer inspection soon sets the point at rest. To follow in detail these magnificent pagan monuments—for such they are—as they present themselves in our course down the river, we first meet with Knowth, an abrupt, hemispherical mound, with rather a flattened top, rising out of the sloping hill of the townland, from which it takes its name. Some enormous masses of stone, arranged in a circular manner round its base, tell us, however, that it is evidently the work of design; and some excavations made into one of its sides show that it consists of an enormous cairn of small stones, covered with rich greensward, occupying in extent of surface about an acre, and rising to a height of nearly eighty feet. As far as we can judge by external appearances, although history is against us, it appears to be as yet uninvestigated; but as there are no means of access to its interior, we can only speculate as to its use, and the mode of its construction, from an examination of similar structures in this vicinity.

"We therefore pass on to the next monument, that of New Grange. Like that just described, it consists of an enormous cairn or hill of small stones, calculated at one hundred and eighty thousand tons weight, occupying the summit of one of the natural undulating slopes, which enclose the valley of the Boyne upon the north. It is said to cover nearly two acres, and is four hundred paces in circumference, and now about eighty feet higher than the adjoining natural surface. A few yards from the outer circle of the mound, there appears to have stood originally a circle of enormous detached blocks of stone, placed at intervals of about ten yards from each other. Ten of these still exist on the south-eastern side. Such is the present appearance of this stupendous relic of ancient pagan times, probably one of the oldest Celtic monuments in the world, which has elicited the wonder, and called forth the admiration of all who have visited it, and has engaged the attention of nearly every distinguished

Archidona, take a farewell glance at its fortress-covered heights and rugged mountains, and pass on to rest for

antiquary, not only of the British Isles, but of Europe generally; which though little known to our countrymen, notwithstanding that it is within two hours' drive of Dublin, has attracted thither pilgrims from every land. It is said that a large pillar-stone, or *stele*, originally stood upon its summit. Before we speculate upon the date or origin, or offer any conjectures as to the uses of this vast cairn, we shall conduct our readers into the interior, and point out the objects within most worthy of attention. This mound is hollow; it contains a large chamber, formed by stones of enormous magnitude, and is accessible through a narrow passage, also formed of stones of great size, placed together without mortar or cement; and considering the bulk and positions they occupy, exciting our astonishment how such Cyclopean masonry could have been erected by a people who were, in all probability, unacquainted with those mechanical powers so necessary in the erection of modern buildings. Moreover, although some of the stones, both within and without this tumulus, bear marks of being water-worn, and were probably lifted from the bed of the Boyne, others belong to a class of rock not found in the neighbourhood at all; some are basaltic, and others must have been transported here from the Mourne mountains.

"When we first visited New Grange, some twelve years ago, the entrance was greatly obscured by brambles, and a heap of loose stones which had ravelled out from the adjoining mound. This entrance, which is nearly square and formed of large flags, the continuation of the stone passage already alluded to, is now at a considerable distance from the outer circle of the mound, and consequently the passage is at present much shorter than it was originally, if, indeed, it ever extended so far as the outer circle. A few years ago a gentleman, then residing in the neighbourhood, cleared away the stones and rubbish which obscured the mouth of the cave, and brought to light a very remarkably carved stone, which now slopes outwards from the entrance. This stone, so beautifully carved in spirals and volutes, is slightly convex, from above downwards; it measures ten feet in length, and is about eighteen inches thick. What its original use was—where its original position in this mound—whether its carvings exhibit the same handiwork and design as those sculptured stones in the interior, and whether this beautiful slab did not belong to some other building of anterior date—are questions worthy of consideration, but which we have not space to discuss.

"We now enter the passage which faces the Boyne; it runs very nearly north and south, and measures sixty-three feet in length; it is formed of twenty-one upright stones upon the right side, and twenty-two on the left, and

awhile under the Lovers' Rock, by the side of the Guadalhorce, which rushes impetuously along its base. Although

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is roofed with flags of immense length, resting in some points upon the upright side-stones, but in other places chiefly supported by masonry external to them; one of these is seventeen feet long and six broad. The general height of the passage, for about three-fourths of its length, is about six feet; but from the accumulation of earth towards the entrance, it is scarcely so much at present. It then rises suddenly, and again, within seventeen feet of the chamber, it rises so as to slope gradually into its roof; and the stones of which this portion is composed are of gigantic size, many of them eight and ten feet high. Its average breadth is about three feet; but some of the side-stones having fallen inwards, so as almost to touch, one requires to creep on all-fours to pass this point. Most of these side-stones are remarkably smooth, even on parts where the rubbing of a century and a half could not have produced this polish, and appear to have been long exposed to the action of water or the atmosphere. Some have smooth transverse indentations; and very many of the stones throughout this building, as well as others used for like purposes in the neighbourhood, have small sockets or mortices cut near, or in their edges, which appear to have been made for the insertion of wedges, either to split the stone, or to lift it.

"The passage leads to a large dome-roofed chamber. As all is perfect darkness within this cavern, it is necessary to illuminate it in order to form any just idea of its figure or extent. When about half lighted up, and we begin to perceive the size and character of this great hive-shaped dome, and its surrounding crypts, formed of stones of such immense size, half revealed to us by the uncertain light of our tapers, an air of mystery steals over the senses—a religious awe pervades the place; and while we do not put any faith in the wild fancies of those antiquarians of the last century, who made the world believe that this was a great Druid temple, an Antrum Mythræ, in which the sacred rites of paganism, with its human sacrifices, were enacted, we wonder less at the flight which their imaginations have taken. This cavern is nearly circular, with three offsets, or recesses, from it—one opposite the entrance to the north, and one on each side, east and west, so that the ground plan, including the passage, accurately represents the figure of a cross. The right or eastern recess is eight feet deep, nine high, and seven broad; it is slightly narrowed at the entrance.

"The basement of the great chamber, to about the height of ten feet, is formed of a circle of eleven upright stones, partially sunk in the ground, placed on edge, with their flat surfaces facing inwards, and forming the sides of the cavern. From this course springs the dome, formed by stones somewhat less

there are no tales of the supernatural connected with this remarkable peak, it has its story attached to it; a story,

in size, placed horizontally on the flat, with the edges presented towards the interior; and by each layer projecting slightly within that placed beneath, they thus, by decreasing the circle, form a dome without an arch, and the whole is closed at top by one large slab: the stability of the mass is preserved by the pressure of the surrounding material.

"This form of roofing, which evidently preceded a knowledge of the principles of the arch, is to be found in many of our early buildings—generally pagan, and chiefly sepulchral, in this country—in the interiors of some of the inns or raths, and in very early Christian oratories; and not only in Ireland, but in Egypt, Greece, and Asia Minor, in one of the pyramids of Sackara, as well as in the remains of a temple at Telmessus. Pococke had observed a similar structure in the Pyramid of Dashour, called by the Arab name of Elkebere-el-Barieh; and all the visitors to the Cyclopean-walled Mycenæ are well acquainted with the appearance of the great cavern, known by tradition as the tomb of Agamemnon, and believed by some antiquaries to have been the treasury of Atreus, between which and New Grange comparisons have often been made; their resemblance, however, consists in the *principle* on which the dome is constructed. That remnant of the early Hellenic people was formed by an excavation scooped out of the side of a natural hill; the gallery which leads to it does not appear ever to have been covered in; the sides of the dome spring directly from the foundation, like that at Clady, and not from a row or circle of upright pillars. The interior is perfectly smooth, and was originally covered over with plates of brass: some of the nails which fasten them even yet remain; but these latter circumstances merely show a greater perfection in art among the early Greeks—the architectural principle is perhaps the same in both. The ground plan of the great Boyne monument also finds its analogue in the Orient; at Tyre and at Alexandria we find tombs carved out of the solid rock, of precisely the same cruciform shape, having three minor excavations projecting from the several chambers. But while we thus allow ourselves to draw upon our recollection of other lands, we fear, our readers, and the visitors of New Grange, for whose use in particular we write, may require some further information as to the measurements, construction, and hieroglyphics of this remarkable monument. The top of the dome is nineteen feet six inches from the floor, which is now covered with loose stones and rubbish. From the entrance, to the wall of the chamber opposite, measures eighteen feet; and between the extremities of the right and left crypts twenty-two feet. Each of the side chambers is nearly square, their sides being formed of large oblong blocks of stone; but they are not all of the

of course, of unheard-of devotion of a Christian captive for a Moorish damsel, ending in the death of both the hero

same size; that on the right of the entrance, the eastern, is very much larger than either of the others, and is also the most enriched with those rude carvings, volutes, lozenges, zig-zags, and spiral lines, cut into the stones, and in some instances standing out in relief, to which we alluded in describing the passage.

"Having conducted our readers thus far over the details, we think they are anxious to know what is our opinion as to the purpose for which New Grange was constructed. We believe, with most modern investigators into such subjects, that it was a tomb, or great sepulchral pyramid, similar, in every respect, to those now standing by the banks of the Nile, from Dashour to Gaza; each consisting of a great central chamber, containing one or more sarcophagi, entered by a long stone-covered passage. The external aperture was concealed, and the whole covered with a great mound of stones or earth in a conical form. The early Egyptians, and the Mexicans also, possessing greater art and better tools than the primitive Irish, carved, smoothed, and cemented their great pyramids; but the type and purpose in all is the same. From a careful examination of the authorities which refer to the accidental opening of New Grange at the end of the seventeenth century, we feel convinced that this monument had been examined long prior to that date; and therefore we derive little information from modern writings as to what its original condition was. That the Danes were well aware that these tumuli contained caverns, and probably knowing that gold and treasure was to be found within them, rifled several of those ancient sepulchres, we have undoubted authority. How far anterior to the Christian era their date should be placed, would be a matter of speculation; it may be of an age coeval, or even anterior, to their brethren on the Nile.

"Were we to strip the chamber and passage of New Grange of the surrounding mound, to remove the domed portion of the cave, and to replace the outer circle, at those parts where it is deficient, we should have presented to us a monument not unlike Stonehenge.

"Not only in the surrounding plain, but even on the hill of New Grange itself, do we meet small sepulchral caves and mounds. The whole is one vast cemetery. On the western side of the natural hill sloping from this mound, we some years ago were present at the opening of a small "kistraen," reached by a narrow stone passage—a sort of miniature New Grange; in it were a quantity of human bones, and those of some other animals; some burned, and some not bearing any marks of fire; but the most remarkable circumstance about it was, that the bottom of this little chamber was lined

and the heroine, who were determined to share each other's fate in the very eyes of the lady's implacable

with stones, the upper surfaces of which bore evident marks of fire—in fact were vitrified—showing that the victim, or the dead body, was burnt within the grave.

"Within view of New Grange, and about a mile distant, seated on one of the higher slopes upon the Boyne's banks, the third great cone of the group attracts our attention—Dubhadh, or Dowth.

"A desire having long existed to explore some of these monuments, the Committee of Antiquities of the Royal Irish Academy obtained permission from the trustees of the Netterville Charity, the present proprietors of the Dowth estate, to examine the interior; and although the examination has not been attended with the expected success, we have no hesitation in pronouncing it to have afforded the most valuable results. A catacomb, or series of chambers, not unlike those found beneath the great central chamber in the largest pyramid of the Sackara range, has been fully explored and rendered accessible to the curious, and these we shall presently detail.

"Having made an open cutting into the western side of the mound, in following out these passages, it was certainly the most advisable as well as the cheapest plan, to follow in the same course till the centre was reached. The upper portion above the lintel is modern, the stones being replaced by the workmen. Following this exposed gallery, which runs eastward, and is formed of huge stones, set on end, and slightly inclined at top, nine on the right, and eleven on the left, sunk in the ground, and roofed with large flags, similar to that of New Grange—we were led into a chamber of a cruciform shape, and formed, with slight exceptions, upon the type of that already described in the great pyramid of New Grange. This passage is twenty-seven feet long, and some of its stones are carved with circles, curved and zig-zag lines. Both in this passage, and at the entrance of several of the minor crypts and recesses which branch from the chamber, we find sills, formed by large flags, projecting above the surface, placed there apparently for the purpose of preventing the external pressure driving in the side walls. The large central chamber is an irregular oval, nine feet four by seven feet, and the blocks of stone which form its upright pillars, are fully as large as those found at New Grange, and several of them are carved like those which we have already described in that place.

"In the centre of the chamber stands a shallow stone basin, or rude sarcophagus, of an ovoid shape, much larger than any of those at New Grange, measuring five feet in its longer diameter. There are no basins in the three adjoining recesses. These recesses have narrow entrances, and are less open

father, and accordingly dashed themselves down from its giddy heights. Such is the story told by Mariana; but in Antequera they have yet another more romantic still.

It appears that a Moslem knight had long loved in secret the daughter of a noble of Antequera, when that city was still under the dominion of the Crescent. To save her from becoming the wife of another they eloped; and when they reached the Lovers' Rock, they rested to refresh themselves by the waters of the Guadalhorce, and asked some neighbouring shepherds for a cup of water. This was granted; but the shepherds, who had evidently never been lectured into the propriety of minding their own business, and not troubling themselves about their neighbours' affairs, imagining the damsel was an unwilling victim, determined to attack her lover, which they accordingly did; and when the Moor fell, pierced with wounds, his bride seized a dagger, and stabbing herself, fell a lifeless corpse by his side. They were buried where they died, at the foot of the Peña de los Enamorados; and

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than those of New Grange; that upon the right, and the one opposite the entrance, are each five feet deep; the southern recess is six feet nine in length; and, at its western angle, leads into a passage, which opens by a narrow entrance into another series of chambers and passages, the most extensive of which runs nearly southward. The roof of the right-hand chamber is nine feet seven inches from the floor. Creeping through these dark passages, and over the high projecting sills, which we have already described, we come to two small chambers, one within another, running nearly south-west, and measuring about two feet six each in breadth. Following, however, the long southern gallery, we find its floor formed by a single stone, ten feet six long; and in the centre of this flag, we found a shallow oval excavation, capable of holding about one gallon of fluid, and apparently rubbed down with some rude tool. Beyond this flag, and separated from it by a projecting sill, we find a terminal chamber, with a sloping roof, and capable of holding a man in the sitting posture. The examination of this great catacomb, and the recent excavations at Dowth, have done good service to the cause of antiquarian research in this country."

their grave, we are informed by an historian of Antequera, is still eagerly sought for by the country people, as tradition says her jewels were buried with her. But although this rock has evidently taken its name from some origin like the foregoing, it is singular why every mountainous country should have a Lovers' Rock and a Devil's Bridge.

By the way, it is a curious thing there are not any ghosts in Spain; no tales of horrible apparitions that come either with good or evil intent to haunt certain families, and terrify strong-minded people. The miraculous tales of images and visions of their protecting saints seem to have supplanted the sort of legendary lore in which northern nations revel; all their superstitions have a religious cast about them, but of ghosts and fairies you never hear a syllable. It is singular that it should be so, for one might well imagine they would have possessed some lingering souvenir of the former possessors of the land; some trace might still be found of a people whose favourite pastime was hearing tales of the Arabian Nights. If they had them, they have been effectually driven out by the crowd of marvellous legends attached to the images of favourite saints.

A pleasant ride of a few leagues brought us to Archidona, a wretched little town, situated on the southern slope of a peculiarly shaped hill. Its three bare peaks rise upon the summit, with a depression between them, looking like the crater of an extinct volcano. The ascent through the town is precipitous; the layers of solid rock, bare and exposed, forming the pavement. Remains of the ancient walls still girdle its inaccessible heights, and it was formerly one of the strongest fortresses the Moors possessed. It fell into the power of the Christians, in 1462.

After passing Archidona, we entered once more upon a wooded country, and halted, in the middle of the day, in a most sylvan scene, beneath the shade of the evergreen

oak. A grassy plot, surrounded by wild roses and hawthorn, the white flowers of the convolvulus (Convolvulus lineatus) covering the ground. A very scene for a gipsy encampment, so sweet and rural, and so far away from any human dwelling-place. Wild and lovely are these Sierras, and between Archidona and Loja it appears to have been deserted by man. Traces of his existence, however, are evident in the vast fields of wheat which appear here and there in the forest glades; but whence come the hands that cultivate them? They must have a weary walk when preparing the ground to receive its crop, and again when the harvest calls them to reap the fruits of their toil. Lovely, but desolate, was our ride this day; the wide extent of forest ground, hemmed in on all sides by lofty mountains, which glowed with fire when the light of the setting sun bathed them in the tints.

We never met a soul the whole way save the bearer of Her Catholic Majesty's mails; the vast correspondence which was on its way to Archidona and Antequera; the boy to whom they were entrusted, mounted on a sorry steed, jingling with bells and decked with gaudy trappings. His letter-bags were slung behind him, nor did they appear a very great encumbrance. Soon afterwards we struck in upon the road, which we had traversed before, when riding from Granada to Seville; and night had long set in before we took up our old quarters at the posada in Loja.

The same well-known road was traversed the next day on our way to Granada, and the snowy summits of the Sierra Nevada warned us once more of our proximity to this most enchanting of cities. The road seemed long and weary, and the night was far advanced before we arrived at the end of our peregrinations. The moon was shining in all her beauty as each well-remembered scene again broke upon our view; and the next morning found

us once more settled in Granada, where we were to pass the burning summer months amid its gushing waters and shady groves. Once more our footsteps lingered amid the fairy halls of its Moorish palace; and well did I feel the truth of Dumas' remark, that although one of the greatest pleasures in life may be the first view of Granada, there is one greater still—that of visiting it a second time.

A BARBER'S SHOP

CHAPTER XI.

"It was night before our travellers got to the middle and most desert part of the mountain; where Sancho advised his master to remain some days, at least as long as their provision lasted; and accordingly that night they took up their lodging between two rocks: but fortune directed Gines de Passamonte, that master-rogue, to this very part of the mountain."—Don Quixote.

"The curate and the barber of the village, both of them Don Quixote's intimate acquaintances, happened to be there at that juncture."—Ib.

EXCURSION TO THE SIERRA—NIGHT ON THE PICACHO—PLEASANT INTELLIGENCE—ROBBERS OR NO ROBBERS—LUCKY ESCAPE—CHATO—FAREWELL VISITS—A SPANISH DILIGENCE—MENGIBAR—BAYLEN—CASTANOS—LA MANCHA—DON QUIXOTE—THE BARBER AND THE CURATE—ARRIVAL AT MADRID.

We were once more established at Granada, and the summer months passed away as rapidly as possible. Again we revelled in the enjoyment of its lovely views,

and wandered about its green vega, visiting each favourite spot with renewed pleasure. Days went by as evenly as days generally do in this half oriental land, where time glides away so imperceptibly.

At last we were tempted to ascend the Picacho a second time, and do the honours of the Sierra Nevada to some fresh arrivals, who were most anxious to explore the grand mountain scenery around. We were so much enchanted with our previous visit, that it required but little persuasion to induce us to undertake a second expedition; and one fine morning, at three o'clock, we started. Our ascent was all "couleur de rose," and we found the Choza as hospitable a refuge as we did on the first occasion; but remembering our previous adventure, descending in the dark, we determined this time to wait until the morning, and reach the summit in time to see the sun rise. This arrangement enabled us to ramble about the rocky scenery of the Choza, and revisit several interesting spots. The sunset was splendid; for at an altitude of more than eight thousand feet we were sufficiently elevated to see the summits of the range of mountains below us crimsoned with its parting hues. When the dark shades of night succeeded the soft grey twilight, which at this elevation was remarkably clear, we were glad to form a sort of gipsy party round a bright-blazing fire, which, diffusing its genial warmth around, rendered us utterly regardless of cold; in fact we spent a very merry evening, talking and chatting, and our guides related many an amusing anecdote. When in the middle of a wonderful bandit story, we were joined by two poor country peasants, seeking that medicinal herb, manzanilla, so much recommended, so generally used by the medical faculty of Spain. The poor men were glad enough to take a seat near the fire, and we commenced preparations for our airy couch;

protected by the sheltering rock, we passed the night very comfortably beneath the vaulted canopy of heaven—with this exception, however, that so much had been said about being amply provided with cloaks to guard us against the cold, that we fell into the opposite extreme, and at midnight a universal exclamation arose, "really the heat is quite oppressive;" and strange as it may appear, it is not more strange than true, that two of our party were quite glad to have recourse to the fan in regular Spanish fashion.

Our old friend Francisco was in high force, declaring that he loved the Choza far better even than his native village, for here he was "monarch of all he surveyed," and at this height there were no unwelcome insects to disturb his rest, and no women or children to drive him distracted. Alas for the morn! as usual our intentions were frustrated, as those of people generally are who take the trouble of climbing a mountain to see the sun rise. On this occasion the sun declined to rise, or at least came forth curtained by such heavy clouds, that after a serious discussion on the subject, we resolved on not attempting the ascent until the day was more advanced. It was something like a conversation previous to undertaking a pic-nic on a cloudy English day, when everybody's opinion is in accordance with his wishes, and against the very evidence of his senses, some of us maintaining the clouds would disperse, others declaring it was hopeless; at length we found it was time to make preparations for breakfast, and after having satisfactorily concluded that very important commencement of a fatiguing excursion, the sun shone forth in all his splendour, and we started for the summit. Again we stood upon one of the loftiest points of the Sierra, the grand panorama bursting upon our view in all its solemn grandeur.

Having already ascended this height, I must not detain my readers a second time, and after numerous observations with aneroid and thermometer had been taken, we retraced our steps towards Granada. Not more than an hour had passed after we left the Choza, when we met the Neveros coming up to fetch their nightly cargo of snow. After the usual friendly salutation, they paused, as if uncertain what to do; at length beckoning one of the party aside, a mysterious conversation in an under tone commenced: and we were told that we had better not proceed, for a band of "ladrones" were waiting for us at the Puche, a well-selected spot for a robbers' haunt, about half way down the Sierra. Eighteen well-armed, determined brigands, who had resolved on capturing the "rich English," who had been foolish enough to wander into such elevated regions. They also told us that they had already a few days before captured an officer, who had gone on a shooting excursion to the mountains, and kept him for ten days in a cave, whence he had contrived to escape.

In short, the men looked grave; and incredulous though we all were about robbers, we began to feel that sort of indefinable sensation which follows upon a well-told ghost story. We began by thinking there might be some truth in it, and ended in feeling convinced that there was. And now commenced the grand cabinet council; what was to be done? After all it might be a false alarm; we had but one alternative, either to brave the danger or make a détour by Guejar, a village in the valley of the Xenil, which was quite safe, but a desperately bad road, and an immense way round. Some thought the road too bad, and fancied it better to brave the danger; others wished to go round; at one moment it was better to go, and then it was better to stay—in short, it appeared as if the knotty point would never be settled, when one of the

gentlemen boldly taking upon himself to decide our fate, pronounced that we should not show the white feather, but proceed without delay, only taking the precaution to hurry on, that we might pass the dreaded place before nightfall, for it was already late.

Francisco, nimble as a deer, and perfectly acquainted with every nook and corner of the Sierra, darted off to be on the look-out, announcing his intention of seeking assistance in the cortijos of the Xenil, if he saw any suspicious personages in the distance. All was arranged, and on we went in solemn silence, speculating on the pleasant prospect of passing a week in some dark cave. We had nothing to lose, for we had no money with us, consequently a ransom could be their only hope of making money. We all had our own thoughts and occupations; and my fair companion sought to bury her gold chain and eye-glass in the folds of her dress, that she might have some chance of preserving her most valued friends in case of accident; I was calculating what they would value us at; and as to our escort, I shall charitably conclude that the gentlemen were meditating how they could best protect the ladies under their charge. On we went, and saw nothing, and heard nothing; and when we reached the dreaded Puche, everything was remarkably quiet. All hopes or fears of an adventure were at an end; the Rubicon was passed; when, to our horror, we heard the man, who was leading one of the horses in front, exclaim: "Aqui están," (here they are.) A huge rock had concealed them from us; and one moment told us that we had been discovered. By an involuntary impulse, we checked our horses, but then made the best of it; and putting a bold front upon the matter, we were in a moment face to face with the enemy.

And there they were, looking so delightfully pic-

turesque, about twenty men leaning on their muskets, dotted about at equal distances along the road, evidently awaiting our arrival. They closed round us in a friendly manner, at the same time quietly, but most determinately impeding our onward progress. We exchanged the most loving salutations; and then they asked us, what we were doing there, and where we had been. We assured them, we had only been to see the sun rise from the Picacho, and having been frustrated in our purpose, we had taken a bird's-eye view of their most lovely land, and were quietly returning to Granada.

"And who was the man, who passed about a quarter of an hour ago? Did he belong to you?"

"He was our guide," replied the man belonging to the horses, who was trembling with fear from head to foot. "He went on to give the alarm, as we were told a band of robbers were waiting for us here."

"And how did you hear of the robbers?" asked a man who evidently seemed to be the leader of the party.

"The neveros told us," we replied; "and our guide went on to seek assistance."

"Well, it is true," said their leader, "there are plenty of robbers about, and I am the Alcalde of Monachil, come up with a party of men to look for these robbers; we are the Justicia, and are going up the Sierra in search of them."

Alas! and this was to be the finale of our adventure with robbers. To find the romance of the thing turned into the matter-of-fact reality of a few villagers with their chief magistrate at their head, wandering about in pursuit of the bandits. I continued talking to the old man, who was most liberal in giving us very good advice, at the same time refusing us any assistance, and assuring us that we should inevitably fall in with them lower down the

mountain on our way to Granada; he also informed us that he and his men were going to look for them higher up. This seemed rather inconsistent; however, we made each other many civil speeches, and with a mutual "Vayan V^ds con Dios!" we parted, and they were soon lost to view as they scrambled over the rocks. We had hardly parted five minutes, when we were hailed by Francisco, who came breathless up from the valley of the Xenil, accompanied by several men with their muskets over their shoulders; he expected to find us already in the power of the robbers, for he told us, that when he turned the self-same rock where we first perceived them, he saw two men with muskets creep out of a cavern, and without waiting for more information, he took to his heels to spread the alarm. They fired upon him, but missed, and he flew on the wings, not of love, but of fear to rouse the country. It was now quite dark, and we had yet some leagues to go; the countrymen, who had come to our assistance, declined accompanying us, preferring to stay and defend their homes and families, instead of risking their lives in the cause of the foreigners.

Our guides enjoined silence, and a solemn party we were winding down those rugged paths in the dead of night, fearing that the slightest sound might betray us to the dreaded bandits, who were doubtless waiting for our approach behind some hidden rock. At last we were in the vega, and our brave companions pronounced that we were out of danger, and might speak with perfect safety; and at midnight we arrived at Granada. On the following day, Francisco informed us that the people we met were really the robbers; but that, on hearing from us that he had escaped, and that the alarm was given, they had wisely passed on, announcing themselves as the "Justicia."

This naturally excited great discussion; there was an irresistible fascination in the idea, that we really had met live banditti, seen them, spoken to them, and, what was more, escaped from them. Each advocated a different view of the subject; one took up this side of the question, another that, and the case was so long and so eloquently argued, that we ended by not any of us knowing what opinion we really entertained. We consulted several Spaniards, who came to the wise conclusion, that it was in all probability, the Justicia we met; but as the Justicia in Spain are nearly as great thieves as the robbers themselves, we might consider we had had a very fortunate escape.

Jesting apart, we had really got off well; for there is no doubt, there was a very formidable band of robbers in the mountain at that period, and we found, on referring the matter to the captain-general, that the story of the officer who had been taken prisoner, was really true. He went upon a shooting excursion alone, and as he was riding leisurely along, with his musket across his knees, smoking his cigar, he was accosted by two men, who introduced themselves as miners; they offered to join him as they were going the same road, and one of them asking for a light, he loosed his musket for a moment, when the other seized it, and announced he was a prisoner. They carried him off to a cave, and demanded twelve thousand reals as his ransom, which was to be left at a certain spot, on a day fixed. The authorities sent out a number of the Guardia Civil, disguised, with the money; but the robbers, discovering their danger, made off, leaving the poor man to make his escape and return to Granada as best he could.

A sudden plague of robbers seemed to have infested Andalucia this season, and the country was in a worse state than it had been for many years past. The

leader of the band was a man, nicknamed Chato, who kept all the country between Cordoba and Ronda in terror. He hardly condescended, however, to attack travellers; he came down and levied contributions on the farm-houses, carrying off hostages for the payment of the required sums. Some of his prisoners were very much edified by the devout manner in which he and his band observed Lent, for they fasted most religiously. It seemed almost impossible to put down these robbers; many of the villagers were in league with them, and the vast uninhabited tracts and mountainous country gave them ample opportunity of concealing themselves from their pursuers. Even the better class hardly venture to assist in their capture; their possessions in the country being at the mercy of these lawless bands, they find it less trouble to live on good terms with them, than to assist a government, whose arm is not sufficiently strong for protection.

Andalucia was proclaimed under martial law this last autumn, but even this did not succeed; Chato, as yet, having contrived to elude their vigilance. The papers were forbidden to allude to the subject, as their long existence unchecked, rather reflected on the government. Now and then rumours of his capture were spread, but as speedily contradicted. Once, they gave all the particulars of his having been murdered in a quarrel by an associate in crime, and when his murderer was arrested, and asked, why he had shot him, he replied with great sang froid, because he was such a thief (muy ladron). A few days after, however, the papers announced that the real Chato had appeared in Estremadura.

Our stay in Granada at length drew to a close; but these robbers interfered sadly with our plans, and many were the discussions which ensued as to the best means of getting to Cordoba, a distance in reality of only sixty

miles, and yet the journey thither appeared to be attended with difficulties almost as insurmountable as the discovering of the North-West Passage. All the high roads in this country branch from Madrid to the large provincial towns; and travelling by the regular diligences from one extremity to the other is easy enough, but to get from one intermediate town to another is a matter requiring serious consideration for those who are not sufficiently good equestrians to take a short cut across the mountains. The ride from Granada to Cordoba by Alcala is practicable enough on horseback, but in this instance we were debarred, not so much by the fatigue, as the dread of Chato and his followers, who were in that neighbourhood, and whose appearance would not have been a very agreeable addition to a party of "unprotected females." We had too lately escaped, voluntarily to run the risk of meeting with some real adventure. Visions of a cave in the mountains as a residence for even a limited period, with the more disagreeable penalty of handing out some thousands of reals or dollars before obtaining permission to depart, did not offer a very tempting prospect. Besides which, the captain-general would not hear of our going without an escort; and as the troops were then all engaged in pursuit of the robbers, he could only offer us a guard or two, and would not guarantee our safety unless we kept to the high road, thus giving us a pleasant little détour taking two sides of a triangle—thanks to Chato.

A ride, too, along a dusty high road is anything but amusing, however charming it may be in a wild mountainous district. The difficulty of getting places in the diligence to Baylen, combined with the uncertainty of finding others upon our arrival there in the down diligence from Madrid to Cordoba made us resign ourselves to the disagreeable alternative. All was put in

readiness, the saddle-bags were duly stored with provisions, large parasols bearing a strong resemblance to juvenile umbrellas, veils, sun-shades were called into requisition to protect our fair complexions from the scorching sun, and the jamugas, or saddles used by women in this country, were prepared with cushions and every little &c. that could add to the comfort of my companions. But, alas! all these precautionary arrangements were of no avail, the very day before our departure news arrived of a fight between some of the banditti and the Guardia Civil; and as the latter were worsted in the fray, prudence required we should change once more for the diligence.

It was just the season when all the public conveyances to Madrid are crowded with people returning from the baths, where they have been spending the summer months. In order to secure places for our numerous party to Baylen, we paid the fare the whole way to Madrid, foolishly confiding in Spanish promises, that if there were people going from Baylen to Madrid, the extra fare should be repaid. This important affair decided by the fact of having paid our money in advance, a most powerful preventive to people changing their minds, we waited with patience for the appointed day, and in the meantime indulged ourselves with taking a last farewell of our favourite haunts. Never does time hang so heavily on one's hands as during the interval which elapses after every preparation has been made for departure, when everything is packed up, and nothing left to afford one any occupation save the one book which may have been left to while away the many hours of the journey. The very idleness creates a feeling of sadness; how much more so when one is about to leave a place endeared by many a recollection, perhaps for ever.

The day of departure arrived at length, and at five in the morning we found ourselves settled in the interior of the heavy diligence, rolling over the very uneven pavement of the Granada streets, with two companions for our journey. One, a native of the town, who was going to travel for the first time in his life—that is to say, he was proceeding to Cordoba. The other was a sweet-looking Sister of Charity, who was returning to Madrid. Poor little thing! her seat with her back to the horses, which we in vain begged her to change, did not agree with her; she suffered dreadfully, but she bore it with such resignation that it seemed to be taken as a matter of course, and added only another to the many trials of this life which she had made up her mind to endure. She was consigned to the protection of the mayoral or coachman very much like a parcel, with care, to be delivered safely, and seemed to have a very vague idea of her journey, for when we arrived at Jaen she asked me if we were near Madrid. A Spanish diligence is a strange unwieldy affair, drawn by ten or twelve mules, whose united strength is sometimes insufficient to drag the cumbrous machine through the beds of rivers, or up the sides of steep acclivities. The mayoral has an attendant sprite, who knows all the mules by name, and when he wishes to urge them on to greater speed he jumps off the box, and by whip and voice induces them to accelerate their pace, running along by their side; the screeching with which he yells out their names being rather a preventive to the passengers, at least those who are in the coupé, enjoying any repose.

Our road lay through a portion of the vega planted with vines and olives, some parts of it having belonged to the Carthusian friars, but now in the possession of a rich capitalist, who is spending a great deal upon them.

Passing the Puerta de Cubillas we bade adieu to the richly-cultivated lands, and began to cross a wild mountainous tract, its bare stony heights relieved here and there by a few tufts of some low shrubs, without a tree to cast the slightest shade on the calcined dusty soil, all the same monotonous arid colour; a lonely venta in some deserted valley where we changed horses gave no variety to the scene, and we breakfasted at a small village called Campillos de Arenas. A little beyond Arenas a singular bare ridge of rocks strikes across the valley with a deep perpendicular cleft, through which the river rushes—when there is one, that is to say, for at present there was not much appearance of water. This forms a natural entrance to the kingdom of Granada; the road is tunnelled through the rocks on one side, and continues to bear the same character, until across a dusty plain the walls of the old Moorish Castle of Jaen are seen cresting the heights, with the town nestled in a hollow at its base. Two hills rise behind the town; between, the space is occupied by the two lofty towers of the cathedral, and, for a wonder, both of them are completed. Jaen contains nothing very remarkable, and therefore we had not much to regret in passing it so unceremoniously.

The two hills just alluded to are backed by a loftier ridge, while to the south there seems to be some fine mountain scenery; in spring it may be pretty, but now the whole country round has the same yellowish sandy tinge, and not even the desert itself can be more dreary than to country on to Baylen. Endless plains sweeping over low undulating hills, without a trace of anything green in their whole expanse; no signs of villages, not a hut to be seen; all the same dusty hue. The only trace of vegetation that met the eye was a few tufts of the caper-plant, which is peculiarly refreshing from the

extreme brilliancy of its deep green leaves and large white flowers; but here it had shared the fate of everything else, and was concealed beneath the same dusty mantle. It was getting dusk as we reached Mengibar, where a suspension bridge crosses the Guadalquivir, which is here a respectable stream flowing between deep sandy banks.

We had changed our fellow-travellers in Jaen, and our new companion told us, for our consolation, that this bridge was not considered safe. He said it cost four millions of reals, but the contractor spent only one half on the work, and pocketed the remainder; and then he indulged in the usual remarks which Spaniards make about the wholesale system of robbery, universal in all public transactions throughout the country. They all seem aware of the state of things, but in this respect the consciousness of the abuse does not appear to lead to any amendment, for they go on just the same, all availing themselves of the first opportunity to practise the very thing they condemn so eloquently. Our companion whiled away the rest of the journey to Baylen with wonderful accounts of robbers' deeds, hair-breadth escapes and strange adventures, enough to put one's nerves into an agitated condition, considering the darkness of the night and loneliness of the country, had not the presence of the Guardias along the road assured us we were comparatively safe. Spaniards do revel in robbers' stories, and now that they have some excuse for talking about them, they really form the staple subject of conversation. We reached Baylen in the middle of the night, having duly had our friend's house placed at our disposal, and many offers of assistance, which I am sure would have been most joyfully given had we required them.

Although, according to our ideas, the Spaniards may

be inhospitable, no people can be more ready to do a good-natured thing for another person, and they will inconvenience themselves with pleasure to oblige you. After a mutual change of civilities, we went to the hotel, where we found a strange mixture of comfort and misery. A French waiter seemed to promise great things; he proved, however, to be a Canadian, and how he had found his way to Baylen was a mystery we did not fathom. A remarkably nice French service of China made its appearance with the coffee, but there was no table on which to put it, and our chairs were all soon occupied in pic-nic style with some of the provisions that we had fortunately brought. After some difficulty we found beds on which to repose until the diligence passed from Madrid to Seville, in which we hoped to find places; but before retiring to rest, I had a most animated discussion with the administrador of the diligence, as he refused to refund the money promised in the event of the places being taken on to Madrid, which they all were the moment we arrived. He called the man at Granada a ladron (a thief), and when I remonstrated on the impropriety of his not fulfilling the promise made to me there, he told me he could not stand such language. I threatened to refer the whole thing to the office at Madrid; and in justice I must add, that through the interference of a friend there, part of the money actually was refunded.

At three o'clock in the morning, we were roused from our very unsatisfactory slumbers by the agreeable intelligence that there was plenty of room in the diligence, and we were relieved from the dread of having to spend a few days in this lively place; for Baylen is a town which even Spaniards would hardly like as a residence, although they may always be boasting of its glories. We proceeded to Cordoba; but as we retraced our steps to Baylen again,

within a month, to make a short excursion into the Castiles, I will at once continue on the route to Madrid, and leave the description of Cordoba until later, as we revisited it on our return to Seville.

Baylen is celebrated for the battle which was fought here in 1808, the one battle which, according to Spanish historians, turned the fortune of war in the Peninsula, and gave the first blow to the arms of Napoleon. The hero of it, Castaños, Duke of Baylen, died in September last, but a few short days after England lost her greatest general. He had been made a Grandee, but otherwise had not received much from a country whose gratitude expended itself in fine words. He lived sometimes in actual poverty, and during many periods of his life, he did not receive his pay regularly, as he himself mentions in his will. Nothing could be more unpretending or humble than the terms of his will; he desired that no parade might be made, that his body might be carried to the church of the parish in which he died by his own servants, and conveyed to the cemetery and laid in the ground, not in a niche, but at the foot of the one in which his sister was buried. He concluded by leaving some few legacies to his servants and dependents. But the government chose to honour him in death, and he was buried by royal decree in the Church of the Atocha, amid all the pomp and splendour of a state funeral.

From Baylen, the road leads to the Carolina, a formally-built village, peopled by foreign colonists, who were brought here to cultivate lands which the expulsion of the Moors had left deserted. About two leagues to the right of La Carolina is the scene of the celebrated battle of the Navas de Tolosa, gained by Alfonso VIII. in 1212. A shepherd led the Christian arms through the mountain passes, whom the superstitious enthusiasm of those days

converted into San Isidro, the patron saint of Madrid. From the Carolina the road ascends to Santa Elena, which stands on a height commanding an extensive view. It now passes the splendid gorge of the Despeñaperros, a truly alpine pass, which is traversed by a magnificent road laid out in the time of Charles III. Here you ascend the high table-land, the great central plateau of Spain, and here you bid adieu to all fine scenery, and leave behind the orange groves and snowy mountains of Andalucia. You reach the Venta de Cardenas, and before you are the wide, uninteresting steppes of that most hideous of provinces, dull La Mancha. Nothing but dreary wastes, without a tree to gladden the eye in the wide expanse; green, perhaps, for a short period in spring, when the corn is rising; but yellow, dusty, and desolate at all other seasons of the year. The villages wear an air of wretchedness, their inhabitants of misery; the gay, dashing air, and knowing-looking sombrero of the Andaluz, is exchanged for the sober heaviness of the Manchego, with his "montera," or fur cap.

The scene is completely changed; but genius has invested this uninviting land with a charm which nature has denied it; and the very first name you hear on leaving the Despeñaperros, the Venta de Cardenas, recalls the name of Cervantes, and the pages of his immortal work. The traveller through La Mancha seeks carefully for each place recorded in Don Quixote, with as much interest as, in other lands, people endeavour to discover the sites of events which are renowned in history, and the first glimpse of a windmill awakes as much delight as though the sorrowful knight and his faithful squire had lived in truth. Such is the power of genius to invest, with all the interest of reality, the mere creation of the fancy, and people a dreary land with souvenirs of beings who never existed except in the mind of their author.

At Santa Cruz de Mudela, the people crowd around, offering narvajas for sale, of all dimensions, for a mere trifle; and, common as the workmanship is, it is wonderful how they can sell them so cheaply. The next place is Valdepeñas, celebrated for its red wine, much of which is consumed in Madrid. It is carried generally in pig-skins, which gives it a strong pitchy flavour. The same dreary plains lead through Manzanares, with its large plaza and wooden balconies; and beyond, the numerous windmills, dotted about, recall one of the whimsical knight's adventures; in short, every step reminds one of Don Quixote and his honest faithful squire. Even while we were waiting, our attention was attracted by a scene in a barber's shop opposite, in which a worthy padre played a conspicuous part; and we immediately pronounced them to be "the curate and the barber of the village, both of them Don Quixote's intimate acquaintance, who happened to be there at that juncture." A copy of the inimitable work of Cervantes, is an indispensable accompaniment to a journey in La Mancha; it will lighten the weary hours, and give an interest to its interminable plains, while it presents a living picture of the people around.

New Castile is entered, but the scenery does not improve; on the contrary, the villages seem more wretched as you advance. Tembleque will shortly have a little more animation, as the railroad to Valencia is to pass through it, and will before long be finished thus far, about seven leagues south of Aranjuez. It would have been completed long since in any other place, but here money was wanting, and the works progressed but slowly. Nothing could be more desolate-looking than the line of railway crossing this desert waste; half-a-dozen men were carrying about a few baskets of earth, and

seemed to have fallen from the skies, so little sign was there of any human habitation in the neighbourhood. But of all wretched places, perhaps La Guardia is one of the worst, the people living in excavations in the rocks. At last we reach Ocaña, a town celebrated for one of Soult's great victories, in 1809. It is a straggling, miserable-looking place, with a large inn. Here we stopped to rest and take a cup of chocolate, for we had a little time to spare before the train started from Aranjuez. The passengers all made their appearance from the different portions of our vehicle, and we talked over various subjects, until one man attracted our attention above the others from his energetic abuse of the English.

I found at last he was an extensive owner of slaves, and one or two of his vessels had been captured by our ships on the African coast. The manner in which he talked of buying slaves, and the atrocious way in which he spoke of his traffic in them, was enough to make one shudder; and those who heard him would not have required their imaginations to be fired by the pages of a novel, before they awoke to the horrors of slavery. A-propos to this, the enthusiasm with which "Uncle Tom's Cabin" has been received in Europe, has extended itself even to the Peninsula, and every wall is now covered with advertisements, announcing half-a-dozen different versions, each purporting to be the only authorised translation, of "La Choza del Tio Tom!"

Further details were interrupted by the summons to depart, and we soon found ourselves once more esconced in the different portions of our lumbering, clumsy-looking vehicle, on our road to Aranjuez. This "Real sitio," or royal country residence, has quite a refreshing appearance, as you descend upon it; here there are actually trees in

the royal park, and the town has a liveable and civilized appearance. The palace is a large, straggling building, and is inhabited by the Court in spring, before the heat drives them to the refreshing breezes of the Guadarramas. The railway station is just in front of the palace, and is at present in a very juvenile state. Everything is taken so quietly and leisurely, that it offers a strange contrast to the bustle of an English railway. It seems an affair of perfect indifference, whether the trains start exactly or not; in fact it is not of the slightest importance; they will wait if there is any one of consequence coming—for it cannot matter. These things, however, must improve when there are more trains, and the line embraces a further extent of road. At present, they go so slowly, and stop at so many small intermediate stations, that they hardly shorten the time. The guards stand with a signal in one hand, and a musket in the other—a curious combination. Some of the stations are regular copies of those in England, and seem quite exotics in the land.

At length you approach Madrid, and what a country to find in the neighbourhood of a capital! Strange infatuation to select such a site for the seat of government, to abandon for such a desert, places like Toledo and Seville and Valladolid! An undulating country lies before you, bare and bleak as man could see, not a tree, not a habitation, the dark chain of the Guadarramas rising in the distance, and immediately in front a low hill crowned with some large buildings, and tall thin spires, and leaden domes. And this is Madrid, the capital of Spain! It has the appearance of a large village; until you reach the very walls, you see no signs of life: no crowded suburbs warn you of the vicinity of a metropolis; all is dead and desert-like, until you actually enter within the gates of the "Villa y Corte

de Madrid." La Corte, as it is designated by Spaniards, is to them the very ne plus ultra of excellence, the paradise of delight, the centre, not only of Spain, but of the world; and many of them are so infatuated with it, that I heard a Spaniard once say, he was quite sure, that if some of his countrymen were going to Heaven, they would keep one eye still fixed upon Madrid!

Within, you seek in vain for any stamp of nationality —it is a noble town, and possesses splendid streets and fine buildings, but anything really Spanish or essentially characteristic is not to be found. If the traveller wishes to see Spain, he must seek it in the time-honoured capitals of her ancient kingdoms, where the Tagus flows beneath the Alcázar of Toledo, where the Guadalquivir reflects the marble palaces of Seville, where Valencia stands amid her far-famed gardens, or Granada rears her Moorish towers in Burgos, Leon, Valladolid, but certainly not here.

Madrid has, in fact, but one recommendation—it is in the centre of the country—and for the sake of that advantage all else has been sacrificed. Vain endeavours have been made to centralise everything, but it is of no avail—the natives of each kingdom still look upon their own capital with a feeling of partiality. They go to Madrid, but merely because it is the residence of the Court; and there it stands, a capital without commerce, without healthful life, without industry, without anything to support it—dependent for everything on distant places, and giving nothing in return for all that it receives. Living is expensive in Madrid. All luxuries come from without, and land-carriage in Spain is slow and dear; fuel is brought from a distance, and even water is a serious item in the expenditure of an establishment, for every drop has to be purchased.

The inhabitants are now engaged in a great work, that of bringing water from a distance; and this undertaking, if really accomplished, will considerably alter and improve the town.

Added to all this, the climate is one of the worst, perhaps, in Europe. The town stands at an elevation of more than two thousand feet above the level of the sea, on the highest point of the great table-land which forms the centre of the Peninsula—according to Humboldt, the largest plateau in the world—and as there are not any forests to catch and break the bleak winds, they sweep over from the Guadarramas with a piercing blast, which often proves extremely dangerous, and the more so from the hot sun, which makes the difference of temperature on opposite sides of the same street so very marked. In summer, the heat is proportionably intense. The great horror of all people here is the "pulmonia," a complaint which carries its victims off in a few hours; and the fear entertained by the Madrileños of exposing the chest to these insidious blasts is rather amusing to a stranger, until he begins to feel the necessity of taking the same precautions himself. At night it is very trying, after leaving hot and crowded rooms; and people may all be seen, with their pocket-handkerchiefs held tight before their mouths, not daring to open their lips for fear the enemy might take the opportunity of seizing upon them with his unrelenting grasp. This irritating air causes an unusual consumption of dulces and all sorts of sweet, softening lozenges, with which people are always prepared to soothe their throats, and comfort themselves after the rude treatment they receive from these rough and ungentle zephyrs.

Still, Madrid is the residence of the Court, and of all the world who love to bask in the sunshine of royal

favour—the resort of all the place-hunters, or "pretendientes," who abound in Spain more, perhaps, than in any other country. With all its modern French appearance, it boasts, however, of great antiquity, and claims to have been founded some four thousand years ago. There are, nevertheless, many who dare to doubt the truth of this bold assertion, and maintain that the first time it was really ever mentioned in Spanish history was in 939, when Ramiro II. of Leon took it by storm. The superior glories of Toledo seem quite to have eclipsed the poor little village of Madrid, which was taken by Alfonso VII. after he had obtained possession of the former in 1083. In 1309, the first Cortes was assembled there, and it became gradually a favourite residence of the kings of Castile. The great Cardinal Ximenes de Cisneros, when he was appointed regent of the kingdom on the death of Ferdinand of Aragon, was the first person who actually established the seat of government within its walls.

Here it was that he sought to curb the discontented spirit of the nobles; and when they asked him by what authority he governed, he pointed to the cannon in the court-yard of his palace, and told them those were his credentials until the arrival of their sovereign Charles V. This monarch contributed much to improve and beautify the royal palace, but it was reserved for Philip II. finally to settle his Court at Madrid, and make it the capital of his kingdom. This monarch may really be considered as its founder; several streets were laid out and planned by his orders, and many convents, hospitals, and other buildings sprang into existence at his mandate. But yet the sovereign at whose will the grand and sombre pile of the Escorial was erected, has not left any edifices in the capital worthy of the high state in which the arts were at that period.

In the reigns of the succeeding monarchs, Madrid glittered with all the splendour of a Court which was gilding the ruin of the country; and in the time of Philip IV. the names of Lope de Vega, Calderon, Quevedo, Valasquez, Murillo, and others shed a lustre over the capital, and literature and art flourished. In 1700 the Bourbons ascended the throne of Spain, and in 1759 their best and greatest King, Charles III., commenced a reign which Madrid has certainly reason to remember. It is to this monarch that Spain owes most of its magnificent roads, which were splendidly laid out, although now so neglected and kept in such wretched repair. In fact, the principal monuments of his rule are roads, bridges, and canals. He planted trees to adorn the Prado, and to him Madrid owes the Museum, the fine gate of Alcalá, the noble buildings of the Custom-House, and sundry others too numerous to mention here. He died in 1788, and the crown descended to his son, a weak and imbecile Prince, beneath whose sway much misery was in store for Spain. Blindly led by his favourite Godoy, he allied himself with France, and Spain became a mere plaything in the hands of Napoleon.

Notwithstanding the internal dissensions, constant revolutions, and intrigues which followed, many great names shone amid the general darkness that was falling on the land; and Jovellanos, Moratin, Melendez, and others are still remembered with pride by their countrymen. In 1808 the King was forced to abdicate in favour of his son Ferdinand, one of the most perfidious tyrants that ever ascended a throne; but it was then too late to redress the grievances under which the country had been suffering; Murat was already at the gates of Madrid, and the new sovereign made a forced journey to Bayonne, where his crown was placed at the feet of the conqueror. The far-famed

events of the "dos de Mayo" (the 2nd of May), however, proved to Napoleon that the enmity of the Spanish nation was deep and undying. The gauntlet of defiance was flung at his feet, and the guerilla warfare of the Spaniards showed their determination to resist the invader.

In 1812, Wellington, at the head of the Anglo-Spanish army, entered Madrid, and the Constitution was adopted by the Commission of Regency at Cadiz during the same year. Ferdinand, not content with annulling all their actions on his return to his capital in 1814, and abrogating the Constitution of 1812, persecuted all those who had been connected with its organisation; and to this fatal step may be traced most of the sad revolutions and scenes of bloodshed, which have since desolated Spain. The restoration of an absolutism, under which they had long been groaning, rankled deep in the heart of the nation; the sovereign endeavoured to make himself popular in Madrid, and, like despots in other countries, sought to amuse the people by fêtes and all sorts of innocent amusements; but in 1820, the spirit of discontent again burst forth, and Ferdinand was obliged to adopt once more the Constitution of 1812.

Three years of civil war ensued, when the French were at length summoned to assist the sovereign in recovering the absolute power he had lost. The Duke d'Angoulême and his troops entered Madrid, and then proceeded to storm Cadiz, where the Constitutionalists held the King as prisoner. When he was restored to his capital, free again to exercise his own will, the oaths he had taken to abide by the Constitution were annulled, his promises broken, and the blood of Riego, as well as many of the Constitutionalists, flowed upon the scaffold. Ten years of comparative peace and tranquillity followed, until the death of Ferdinand in 1833, when his infant daughter

ascended the throne under the guardianship of her mother. Civil war now burst forth; the standard of Don Carlos was raised in the Basque provinces, and the Queen-mother, in order to save her daughter's throne, was obliged in 1836 once more to subscribe to the Constitution, which was modified the following year to suit the circumstances of the country.

In 1839, the treaty of Vergara put an end to the misery of civil war, and Don Carlos retired to France. The "Progresistas," as the ultra-Liberal party are here termed, finally triumphed; the Queen-mother was obliged to leave Spain, and Espartero was named Regent. Well had it been for Spain had she never been allowed to set her foot again in the land to which her avarice and her intrigues have proved such a curse. Opinions, of course, differ much on Espartero's government, his talents, or his energies were doubtless unequal to the post he occupied, and he soon fell before the well-arranged plots of the Queen-mother. After Espartero's flight, in 1843, the young Queen was declared of age; intrigues followed on intrigues; in the course of a twelve-month nine successive governments held the reins of power; but at length, in 1844, Christina triumphed, and General Narvaez became President of the Council. His will was law; he ruled with an iron hand. In the first year of his power several insurrections occurred in Alicante and in other places, which were quelled at the expense of a great sacrifice of human life. It was for the part he took in putting down the disturbances of Alicante that the late President of the Council, Roncali Conde de Alcoy, is chiefly remembered.

Narvaez continued to govern with an almost absolute power, and under his administration the marriages of the Sovereign and her sister were arranged. All these events are too recent and too well remembered to need

repetition. Narvaez was succeeded in the administration of the government by Bravo Murillo, who, it was said, boasted that he could rule with the pen as well as Narvaez ruled with the sword. Following in the steps of his neighbours on the other side of the Pyrenees, he at length thought the time had arrived for a coup d'état, and the 2nd of December in Paris was succeeded by a prorogation of the Cortes in Spain; and the period of the proclamation of the empire was selected as the most judicious moment for a reform in the Constitution, which famous decree was promulgated while we were in Madrid.

LA BOLERA.

CHAPTER XII

Lo mejor del mundo es la Europa (¡ cosa clara !) ; la mejor de las naciones de Europa es la España (¡ quien lo duda !) ; el pueblo mejor de España es Madrid (¿ de veras ?) ; el sitio mas principal de Madrid es la Puerta del Sol—ergo, la Puerta del Sol es el punto privilegiado del globo.—El Curioso Parlante.

MADRID — PUERTA DEL SOL—HOTELS — PRADO — CARNIVAL — BULL-FIGHTS — MERINO—THE COURT — SOCIETY — THE THEATRES — LITERATURE — ALCALA DE HENARES —CARDINAL XIMENES — CERVANTES — ARCHITECTURE — PALACE OF MADRID — ARMOURY — PLAZA MAYOR.

Although the approach to Madrid does not present the attributes of a capital, the interior is handsome ; and the two principal streets which lead from the Prado are

very fine. Perhaps one of the first things which strikes a traveller is the absence of a cathedral, an object which one naturally expects to find in every great city; Madrid, however, does not aspire to this dignity. It is only a town or a "villa," and, although honoured by the epithets of "imperial and crowned, loyal and noble," the favoured abode of monarchs, and the metropolis of the country, it still remains subject to the Archiepiscopal see of Toledo, and has no bishop or cathedral of its own. Neither do the churches contain anything remarkable. The Church of the Buen Suceso, in the Puerta del Sol, is the most fashionable, mass being performed there at a later hour than at the others, but nothing can be more mean or common-place than the interior.

Having mentioned the Puerta del Sol, one must speak of this famous spot, this resort of the idlers of Madrid, and the centre of the town. Its name leads one to expect some great gateway, some fine remnant of antiquity, but the Puerta del Sol is nothing more than a very common-place-looking plaza, with an insignificant church at one end, which is honoured with an illuminated clock at night. A large paved space in front of this church serves as a lounge for those who wish to discuss the scandal and politics of the day, and affords a charming excuse for doing nothing, an occupation in which Spaniards are not loath to indulge. The corners of the streets of the Carmen and the Montera are quite full of idlers, rendering it no easy matter for carriages to force their way among the crowd who stand staring, talking, and examining the various amusements advertised for the evening, and the "affiche" of the approaching bull-fight. Were this called the Plaza del Sol, it would not be inappropriate, for the sun shines here with undiminished ardour during the whole of the day.

The principal streets diverge from the Puerta del Sol,

the Calle Alcala, and the Carrera San Geronimo, leading to the Prado; the others branching into the different parts of the town. The houses in Madrid are very lofty, more in the French style, and families live on separate floors as in Paris. The entrances to some are not particularly attractive, being occupied by little stands where all sorts of cheap goods are sold, and cobblers and shoemakers abound. The shops in Madrid have a great show of rich and costly materials in the windows, in the way of dress and ornaments for the table, &c. The hotels are certainly not such as one might expect to find; the largest is in the Calle Alcala, the "Peninsulares," where most of the diligences stop, and anything more dirty or disagreeable, can hardly be imagined. There is an immense table-d'hôte, where a large and motley assemblage of people are generally to be met with at five o'clock. All nations and all languages, all classes and all kinds are there assembled, without any particular regard as to their rank or position in society. Russian princesses, with their extensive suites, English engineers preparing to take advantage of the railroad mania which has seized upon Spain; artists from all quarters, anxious to copy the treasures of the Madrid gallery; French actors and actresses, and Italian opera-singers, fulfilling their engagements in the capital; English travellers rushing through Spain, seeking to "do" everything in some infinitesimal space of time. When we were there the guests enjoyed an unusual privilege, for at one side of the table sat the immortal Holloway, who had come to diffuse the blessings of his pills among the benighted inhabitants of Madrid.

Although the hotels may not be good, still there are many very comfortable lodgings to be had, all within an accessible distance of the Puerta del Sol, and in these the traveller, who contemplates making an extended

stay, will find it more advisable to establish himself. The Calle Alcala is a noble street, though many of the houses are not sufficiently lofty. The descent to the Prado is planted on both sides, with avenues of acacias. This celebrated promenade is a fine broad walk, overshadowed with trees, and extending an immense length; the large centre space is reserved for pedestrians, and on one side is the fashionable drive. It is also ornamented with several fine fountains. Here in the afternoon may be seen all the world of Madrid driving and walking.

Among the pedestrians there is nothing strikingly different from the appearance that such an assemblage would present in any other country, excepting, of course, the mantillas, which are still very much worn in Madrid. Here and there a priest may be seen passing among the throng, with his long black cloak and strange uncomfortably shaped hat, which mark the dress of the clergy; but even they are beginning gradually to lay these aside, and dress like other people. Almost the only peculiarity of costume which still exists on the Prado is in the person of the nodrizas, or nurses, who come mostly from the provinces of Biscay and the north, and always retain their own national costume while residing in the families of the nobility at Madrid. Some of these women are very good-looking, and in many families no expense is spared upon their dress, which generally consists of a black velvet jacket, and gay-coloured petticoat with broad bands of gold or silver tissue, making it very showy, and the costume is completed by a kerchief tied over the head.

And here numbers of well-appointed carriages parade up and down every day, backwards and forwards, and among them now and then those of the different members

of the royal family, the Queen herself sometimes joining the throng. Her Majesty, however, seldom makes her appearance until very late, when the majority of the world are about returning home, her hours rather tending to reverse the night and day. She is now on sufficiently good terms with the King for him to accompany her in her drives, and the little Princess is generally in the arms of her governess, with the nurse by her side, decked out as magnificently as the nodriza of the heiress to the throne might well expect to be. A pretty drive to the Fuente Castellana forms a continuation of the Prado, and here people get out of their carriages to walk a little. The gayest time to see the Prado is during the Carnival, when Madrid certainly presents as lively a scene as can anywhere be witnessed. The line of carriages then extends up to the Church of the Atocha, and the whole Prado is ringing with the squeaking of masks, diversified with all the varied costumes and strange dresses adopted on such occasions. Parties of masks in carriages and on horseback enliven the paseo; and it would all be charming if one could only forget the intensity of the cold that prevails at this period, but the biting air of Madrid does not tend to enhance one's enjoyment. But for once the Madrileños seem to forget the disagreeables of their climate, and devote themselves "con amore" to all the fun and frolic of the Carnival. The masks have certainly the best of it, their disguise sheltering them alike from the inquiring glances of friends, and the piercing blasts of the Sierra.

The three last days of the Carnival are amusing; but the grand scene of all is reserved for Ash Wednesday, a day in other countries more generally devoted to religious exercises, but here, by special permission, considered the last and merriest day of all. On Ash Wednesday is celebrated what the Madrileños call the Entierro de la

Sardina (the funeral of the Sardine), when the whole population flock down to the grand canal to spend the day, and bury the poor little fish. The origin of this singular custom seems enveloped in obscurity; and how such a burlesque on religious ceremonies should ever have been tolerated in a land where religion has held such a stern fierce rule, seems still more extraordinary. On this day, in the bustle of enjoyment, the cold and the unpropitious climate are forgotten, and all go forth, young and old, rich and poor, to assemble by thousands along the banks of the canal; vehicles of every description are in requisition, and rush down, in order that they may return to convey a fresh cargo to the busy scene.

And when you arrive at the canal you find the green banks covered with people, scattered about and seated in groups upon the grass, round a sort of pic-nic entertainment, feasting in every direction; while the sound of the guitar, and the wild notes of the seguidilla and the manchego, are mingled with the lively air of the "Jota Aragonesa." Multitudes of masks are moving about, some all heads, and some all legs; some clothed in harlequin colours, others mimicking some passing event of the day, and all is a scene of confusion and gaiety, until the attention is suddenly arrested by a funeral dirge, which breaks on the ear, and a procession appears bearing the corpse of the sardine to its resting-place. The bearers are dressed as penitents, with high-peaked caps, and chaunt the regular service for the dead in Latin; one precedes, throwing holy water on the body, and the whole ceremony is gone through according to the most orthodox formula. And every Ash Wednesday this same burlesque is acted, and the clergy, if they endeavoured, would now be unable to put an end to the ceremony, which time and custom have endeared to the Madrileños.

There was an attempt made to do so a year or two ago, but it failed most signally; and a small "pronunciamento," as they call émeutes in this country, would probably have followed on such an infringement of their amusements. So the sardine is allowed to go to the grave with all the funeral honours; and while the people are enjoying themselves on the banks of the canal, the fashionables are taking their farewell of the carnival on the Prado. Such is Ash Wednesday in Madrid. Masks are allowed to appear once more on the following Sunday, called the "Domingo de Piñatas," when balls are given, and the scenes of the carnival are acted over again. There are a great many masked balls both in the theatres and in public rooms during the carnival, those at the Italian Opera House being particularly brilliant. Another gay time to see the Prado is in summer and autumn, on the days when the bull-fights are held.

The Plaza de Toros of Madrid is just outside the fine gateway, called the Puerta Alcalá, and the excitement and commotion in the neighbourhood on these occasions, could hardly be credited by those who have not witnessed these national spectacles. As they occur every week, one would imagine they could hardly excite so much sensation; but, on the days when they take place, the Calle Alcalá presents a scene of perpetual motion—omnibuses and carriages of all sorts and sizes, from the diligences, which are not unaptly called "primitivas," to the well appointed equipage of the grandee, or the now-disappearing calessa—all are rushing along in the same direction, while foot-passengers crowd the pavements. The Plaza at Madrid can accommodate twelve thousand persons, and is generally filled. Many of the most noble families in Madrid are constant and unfailing attendants in the arena; and many of the ladies, leaders of fashion, have lately appeared in the Maja dress, interesting them-

selves, with enthusiasm, in the respective merits of Cúchares and Chiclanero.

The Plaza itself is the property of the Hospital, which is assisted by the proceeds of a spectacle that, according to the bitter pen of Jovellanos, "provides it not only with money to cure the wounded, but likewise with wounded, on which to bestow its money—two indispensable requisites for the maintenance of such an institution." Spaniards turn the lash of their unsparing satire against bull-fights, but continue to patronise them —even foreigners, who are vehement in denouncing them, attracted by the novelty of the scene, seldom fail to attend — and the people, faithful to their favourite amusement, still flock in thousands to witness the corridas.

Madrid is a great place for spectacle. Processions and such things are very handsomely and tastefully arranged. I never saw a gayer or more brilliant scene presented by any capital than the day when the Queen first went to Atocha, in February, 1852, after the dreadful attempt on her life which was made by Merino. The Virgin of the Atocha is the favourite shrine of the royal family of Spain, and the especial object of their veneration; and to this church, which is situated at one end of the Prado, the Sovereign always goes on all particular occasions. The Queen was about to turn her steps thither after the birth of the young Princess of the Asturias, to present her daughter in the temple, when the dagger of the criminal arrested her steps, and her life was saved almost by a miracle. Such a deed struck horror and consternation into the mind of every Spaniard, introducing a fresh, and as yet unknown, crime in the annals of Castile.

Whether he was the agent of a conspiracy, as some would still believe, or acted solely upon his own impulses,

Merino was a fitting instrument for the commission of such an atrocity. His coolness and indifference appeared incredible, and there was something awful in the tone and manner he exhibited to the very last. Within a week from the commission of the crime, he was executed; and many and strange were the rumours then spread abroad, and the sad state of intrigue and demoralisation of everything connected with the Spanish court and government could not have been better illustrated than by the reports which then arose.

It is customary here to place the criminal "en capilla" in a small chapel, or a cell arranged as such, for four-and-twenty hours before the period of execution, during which time he receives all the consolations of religion, and his temporal wants are carefully attended to. In the meantime, the brethren of the Paz y Caridad go about the town collecting alms for the soul of him who is about to be executed, "para hacer bien por el alma del que van á ajusticiar," a custom which has been made the theme of a most affecting poem by Espronceda.

When the brethren returned to Merino's cell, and the tunic was thrown over him, in which dress he was to be led to execution, he said he would not exchange it for the mantle of the Cæsars. At length the procession left the prison to conduct Merino to the scaffold; he was mounted according to custom on a donkey, and if the account of his speeches while on the road be true, no criminal ever exhibited a more appalling instance of hardness and indifference. His conversation turned on the state of the crops; he alluded to the fields requiring irrigation, and complained that they were going as slowly as though it had been the procession of the Corpus, which the coldness of the weather made unnecessary. His last words denied any accomplices in his crime. He died in the same frame of mind, in the sixty-third

year of his age. His body was burnt, and the dagger and everything connected with him, a measure which caused much surprise, and was much canvassed at the time.

All trace of the assassin had been effaced, when people were busily occupied giving their Sovereign a becoming welcome after her escape. Immense sums of money were expended on raising triumphal arches along the road she was to pass, and admirably they were done; not small insignificant erections similar to those in which we indulge, but elegant and well-proportioned arches so substantially arranged, that from a distance they appeared of solid masonry. Another thing that adds so much to the effect of almost all processions abroad, is the hanging of the balconies with draperies, which give such a brilliant appearance to the streets, and in Madrid they are more than usually magnificent. The great houses have their arms splendidly embroidered in tapestry thrown over each balcony, and all the public offices have canopies of crimson velvet and ermine, beneath which is placed the Queen's picture, and that of her husband. All these costly stuffs give a particularly bright appearance to the scene; and the rise of the ground in the Calle Alcalá shows off a procession to peculiar advantage. It was a beautiful day when the Queen went out to the church of the Atocha, now with a double object, not only of presenting the child, but likewise of returning thanks for her own escape from the dagger of the assassin. I have never seen handsomer equipages than the carriages of the grandees who accompanied the Sovereign; the dancing plumes upon the horses and the liveries of the footmen and runners, all beautifully got up and in keeping, presented a magnificent coup-d'œil.

The Queen herself appeared with the child in her arms, and although the shouts with which she was wel-

comed were not quite so overpowering as they would have been in England, her reception, according to Spanish ideas, was most enthusiastic. Flowers and bonbons were thrown upon her carriage as she passed along, and hundreds of odes, printed on every shade of paper, were showered from the windows, testifying the joy of the people at seeing her once more amongst them. The line of carriages was very numerous, each member of the royal family having an empty one following, called a "coche de respeto." For three days, fire-works and all sorts of rejoicings rapidly succeeded each other, the illumination of the great square in front of the palace with thousands of coloured paper-lamps glittering on trees, was quite a fairy sight. A tournament was likewise held in the Plaza de Toros, a most extraordinary specimen of child's play. The Plaza itself was very prettily arranged with banners and all kinds of chivalrous devices, but the performances of the knights themselves only served to show that in Spain, as nearer home, those revivals are a decided failure.

After the ceremony in the church was concluded, the dress worn by the Queen was presented at the shrine of the Virgin of the Atocha, and conveyed there in due form according to the established etiquette. For several days, it was laid out upon the altar for the public to inspect, and we joined the throng to see the rent made by Merino's dagger. The dress was of cloth of gold, the body and mantle of crimson velvet, richly embroidered with the castles and lions of Castile and Leon; and had it not been for the thickness of this embroidery, the hand of the assassin might have had more fatal effect. The custom of the sovereigns of Spain presenting their dresses on special occasions to the Virgin of the Atocha has long been practised: and another curious custom prevails—the dress which the Queen wears every year on the Feast of

the Epiphany, becomes the perquisite of the Conde de Rivadeo, Duke de Hijar, to whose house it is conveyed with all due respect. This curious privilege was granted by John II. in the year 1441 to the first Count of Rivadeo in return for some important services, and thus he and his descendants were always to have the dress the Sovereign wore upon that festival, and likewise to dine at the royal table on that day. His representative still receives the dress; and so far is etiquette carried in Spain even now, that when the Sovereign does not wish the Duke to perform the other portion of the favour conceded to him, she sends in the morning to say she does not dine in the Palace.

The whole style of everything connected with the Court in Spain, is on a scale of great magnificence as far as outward appearance is concerned. The palace is beautifully furnished, and the hall of the ambassadors, or the throne-room as we should call it, is gorgeous. The Drawing-rooms held by the Queen are called "Besa Manos," as all Spaniards kiss hands every time they visit the Sovereign, and not only on presentation as with us. They are held of an afternoon, the gentlemen's Besa manos concluding before that of the ladies' begins. Foreigners are more generally presented at a private audience, and Spaniards themselves prefer it. The Drawing-room here is rather a fatiguing undertaking for the Queen, for after the general circle has dispersed, all the members of the household, down to the lowest dependent in the palace, are admitted to kiss her hand. The balls are on a scale of great magnificence; and although the Queen's ardour for dancing has somewhat abated, she is still passionately fond of it, and keeps it up till four or five in the morning, her partners finding that the qualification of dancing well is a greater recommendation than rank or station.

She is now grown immensely stout, and, with the most good-natured face in the world, has not certainly anything to boast of in elegance of manner or dignity of deportment. She looks what she is—most thoroughly kind-hearted, liking to enjoy herself, and hating all form and etiquette; extremely charitable, but always acting on the impulse of the moment, obeying her own will in all things, instead of being guided by any fixed principles of action. She dispenses money with a lavish hand, while her finances are not, by any means, in a flourishing condition. Her hours are not much adapted to business-like habits—she seldom gets up till four or five o'clock in the afternoon, and retires to rest about the same hour in the morning. She has one most inconvenient fault for a Queen, being always two or three hours behind time. If she fixes a Besa manos at two o'clock, she comes in about five; if she has a dinner-party announced at seven, it is nine or ten before she enters the room; and if she goes in state to the theatre, and the performances are announced for eight, her Majesty makes her appearance about ten.

The interior arrangement of the palace at Madrid, would rather excite surprise in the minds of those accustomed to the regularity of the English Court. Isabel Segunda generally dines alone, and the ladies-in-waiting never reside in the palace, only going when they are specially summoned. The Queen and her husband are now apparently on good terms. He is a most insignificant-looking little man; the expression of his countenance, however, is not unpleasing, but his figure is mean and awkward, a counterpart, in this respect, of his father, the Infante Don Francisco de Paula.

The Court circle is completed by the Queen-mother, whose former beauty has now disappeared, as she has grown very stout; but she possesses still the same fascinating

voice, the same bewitching manner, and the same syren smile, which make all who speak to her bow before the irresistible charm which she knows so well how to exercise. Queen Christina might have worked an immense amount of good for this unhappy country, had she devoted her talents and energies to the improvement of the nation; had she exerted her powerful influence in a good and noble cause, how much might she not have accomplished! but instead of earning a reputation which would have called forth the admiration of posterity, she preferred sacrificing the interests of the kingdom for the sake of gratifying her own inordinate love of wealth, and has, in fact, proved herself worthy of the family from which she sprang.

Her present husband, the Duke of Rianzares rose from a very low rank of life to become the partner of the Queen-mother. He is a remarkably fine-looking man, and their children quite carry away the palm of beauty among the royal family. The two daughters, who are already out, do not appear to be very joyous and happy. They seem in fact as though they would enjoy life much better, could they escape from the honours and etiquette of royalty. The Queen-mother has built rather a handsome house, not far from the palace; but the rooms are too small for reception; the patio is in Seville style, glazed over to suit the climate, and has a charming effect at night, when all is lighted up and filled with flowers.

In Madrid, as in most capitals, there is a great deal of society. The corps diplomatique of themselves contribute to swell the list of parties. Some few Spanish houses receive regularly, but they are rather the exceptions than the rule; one or two brilliant balls being the more general amount of their share in the season. The style of dress here is very expensive; even girls almost always wearing

rich heavy materials, which have not nearly so graceful an effect in the ball-room as toilettes of a lighter description. There is a splendid show of diamonds, and many very pretty faces shine among the leaders of fashion.

The Royal Theatre, which has not been completed many years, and which was built just opposite the palace, is perhaps one of the most magnificent in Europe; but it is unfortunately not well adapted for hearing, rather an unlucky quality in an opera-house. It is splendidly fitted up, with crimson velvet hangings, and painted in white and gold; the pit is arranged with most comfortable arm-chairs, and is much frequented by ladies. It has a very fine effect when the Queen goes in state, although spoilt in some degree by the state box being on the second tier instead of the first. The Italian company, which they generally have, is not by any means first-rate.

There are several theatres in Madrid, and the actors remarkably good. Nowhere in Spain can the national dances be better seen; and nowhere but in Spain can they be seen to perfection. On other stages the figures may be represented, but there is wanting that vigorous grace, that elastic step, that sunny fire, which infuse into those dances a life and an expression all their own. The dress in the Bolera, generally consists of a black velvet body, with silver epaulets and long sleeves, with a gay-coloured silk petticoat, trimmed with two rows of black lace; but it varies much according to fancy. In the drama, sometimes are represented the old plays of Calderon, Lope de Vega, and the more comparatively modern ones of Moratin; but they have plenty of authors in the present day to supply the public with fresh productions, among the most prolific of whom may be mentioned Breton de los Herreros, whose light comedies are great favourites with his countrymen. Almost all the modern poets have contributed something to the drama.

We went one evening to see "Isabel la Catolica," a play of Rubí's, which is much admired, and was originally composed to celebrate some fête-day of the present Queen. It has but little plot, and is rather a grand spectacle, representing the most glorious events in the reign of the great Queen. It was made interesting by the admirable acting of the principal performers, but it is much better adapted for the library. Rubí is well known as the author of some charming Andalucian poems, written in the dialect of his native province, with all the life and fire of the sunny South, and he has likewise composed a great many dramatic pieces. Spaniards, having few other resources, are very fond of the theatre, and aspirants to literary honours, naturally prefer devoting their talents to a subject that will be appreciated and admired, than to burying them in books, where they will only reach the hands of a select few. As yet, there is no reading public in Spain; and how even the few works that are published obtain a sale, seems marvellous.

The state of booksellers' shops, is at once a proof how few and insignificant are the demands of the public. While all other shops are filled with the richest display of goods, those which are devoted to supply the literary wants of the population, are of the meanest description; a small shabby entrance, with a dirty counter covered with some few volumes, so carelessly sewn together, that they almost fall to pieces in your hands, the whole completed by a few shelves for books round the walls. If any signs of showy binding are to be seen, it is confined exclusively to velvet "devocionarios," with all sorts of gold and silver clasps, their gay exteriors attracting the admiration of the pious. If you inquire for any work of which you may have accidentally heard, the probability is that, unless it was actually published there, its existence has never been heard of; and if the unaccountable thought

should enter your head of consulting the worthy bookseller, whether any new publication worth reading has appeared lately, a most extraordinary look of astonishment will welcome so unwonted a question, and he will probably assure you, that there has not in fact been any books written lately.

Libraries are not articles to be met with in Spanish houses. In olden times, learning and study were confined to monastic cloisters, and their inmates were supposed to be the only personages fit to trouble themselves with such lore; but in the mansions of the wealthy or the noble they were not to be seen. The house we had in Seville had suites of apartments and gardens and porticos, but the room which they told us had been formerly devoted to the library had a few little shelves with a cage-work before it, looking more like a larder than anything else. Literary men, themselves, have but a small collection of books. As to seeing such things about on the tables of drawing-rooms, they would be considered untidy, a mark of disorder; and constantly we had to reprove and caution our own servants to prevent their carefully concealing any books we might have lying about the room. There are of course some exceptions, and amongst others the library of the Duke of Osuna is most beautifully arranged and kept in admirable order. In spite of these deficiencies, there are, nevertheless, plenty of candidates for literary fame, and the mania for translating bad French novels is gradually disappearing before the use of a more national literature. Most Spanish authors have, at some time or another of their existence, been connected with the newspaper press, and have suffered exile for their political opinions.

The nation sustained a great loss in the early death of one of her greatest modern poets, Espronceda. Some of his lyric poems are very beautiful, and he would probably

have left a great claim to the admiration of his country, had he not died in the prime of life. A great work which he commenced, but which he did not live to finish, contains many passages of exquisite beauty. The Duke de Rivas is another of the poetic celebrities of Spain; his tragedy of "Don Alvaro," his imitations of the old ballads in his historical romances and many other works, have won him a just renown; and if Espronceda be considered by his countrymen as the Byron of Spain, the Duke de Rivas may be said to have walked in the steps of Walter Scott, in his pretty Moorish tale, written in verse, of the "Moro Exposito," founded on the well-known legend of the Infantes of Lara. The Duke has a most extraordinary facility for versification, and unites it with an ease and a rapidity which is really surprising, even in a language that lends itself so readily to poetical composition.

The style, however, in which Spaniards always excel is satire, that mocking ridicule, that cutting irony which spares neither persons nor things, and in which they indulge with a freedom as galling as it is true. One writer of this stamp, Larra, has appeared in this century, and under the assumed name of Figaro, has published many satirical essays which are much admired. His moody temperament, however, brought him to a tragical end, and he committed suicide, which is rather an unusual occurrence in Spain. His remains were borne to the grave by a circle of admiring and sorrowing friends, and after the funeral discourse had been pronounced, a youth stepped forward and read some lines he had composed for the occasion, thus introducing a new name to Spanish literature, in the person of Zorrilla, who is now perhaps the greatest poet of the present day. His pen is generally occupied with the Moorish times, of which he sings in glowing numbers. His earliest poetic inspirations were

imbibed in the romantic soil of Toledo; and he has ever delighted in recording those days in Spanish history when Moor and Christian fought against each other; and the melody of his versification is well suited to the themes on which he loves to dwell.

Many more writers might be added to the list; Martinez de la Rosa, Hartzembusch, Ventura de la Vega, Escosura, and numerous others have contributed to the dramatic and poetic literature of the day. There are very few novel-writers, as the swarms of translations from the French are amply sufficient to satisfy the taste of that class of readers; but the manners and customs of Madrid life have found an illustrator in the satirical and brilliant pen of Mesonero de los Romanos. A voluminous history of Spain is now being published by Modesto de Lafuente, and a translation of Humboldt's "Cosmos" has lately appeared. These works show symptoms of improvement, and raise the expectation that their literary tastes will be directed to more serious studies, and assume a more intellectual character. These remarks, which give but the names of the most celebrated authors of the present day, serve merely to show that there are Spanish modern writers who have high claims to distinction; and also that those persons are mistaken who deny the advantages of learning Spanish, because there is not anything to read in the language except Don Quixote.

Justice has been done to its ancient literature in Mr. Ticknor's work, which is now being translated into Spanish, with additional notes and illustrations by Don Pascual de Gayangos; but it unfortunately does not extend beyond the commencement of the present century, and in Spain itself nothing is more difficult than to procure any information about literature. Where so few read, it seldom forms the topic of conversation, and as there are no reviews to enlighten the world on the subjects of the day, it

becomes no easy matter to discover what there is worthy of perusal.

The manual of Madrid contains a goodly list of academies, universities, and scientific and literary institutions, where the rising talent of the country may be led into such channels. In compliance with the spirit of centralization which now pervades all departments, the great university was removed from Alcalá de Henares in 1836, and the old college of the Jesuits, in the Calle Ancha de San Bernardo, has been devoted to the new institution; and the old halls in Alcalá, where the great Cardinal Ximenez founded the university in 1508, have been allowed to go to ruin. The wisdom of the measure, so far as the students are concerned, has been questioned, and their fondness for sharing in small pronunciamentos has made the Government regret having removed it from the old town where it had so long existed. The distance, too, was not so very great as to make it inconvenient, it being sufficiently near to Madrid for all purposes. A similar desire to that which has so long prevailed in Paris, of concentrating everything in the capital, is now being carried out here; the result, however, is not the same, for Spaniards never will be brought to look upon Madrid in the manner their neighbours consider Paris: on the contrary, the capital of their own province is their own favourite city, and they only turn to Madrid to see what they can gain in place or pension by frequenting it for a time.

Alcalá de Henares is only five leagues distant; and we went there on a pilgrimage to the tomb of Ximenez. Diligences and omnibuses go backwards and forwards twice a day; and the green trees of the Duke of Osuna's country place form some little variety in the monotonous neighbourhood of the capital. Alcalá itself is a picturesque old town with its conical Flemish roofs and tall

spires, surrounded by crumbling walls; a ridge of sandy hills rises behind, presenting no change in colour, but offering some variety in form to relieve the eye from the dull, flat aspect of the country. The streets all lined by low wooden arcades, have a quaint look. We put up at a most primitive posada on the Plaza, and forthwith proceeded to deliver a letter of introduction we had brought to a resident, and who, we were assured, knew everything that was to be seen. Our friend was not at home, but we were shown into the reception-room to await his return; and wonderful to relate there were a few books on a shelf, and we rejoiced in the prospect of finding something wherewith to while away the time; but these pleasant visions were of short duration, for the medical tone of the volumes did not promise much amusement to people who were hunting after local antiquities.

At last the worthy little gentleman arrived, and nothing could be more courteous than his manner; but he assured us that he could not be the person meant in the letter, for though he should feel much pleasure in showing us everything, he really did not know what there was to see. We suggested the University, "it was all in ruins;" we asked for the chapel of Ximenez, it was "muy feo" (very ugly); an assertion which when made by a Spaniard, is a convincing proof that the object thus designated is most especially worthy of the traveller's attention. We inquired when we could see these ugly things; he told us on the following day; and on our assuring him that we intended to return to Madrid on the morrow, the poor man seemed to think us most unreasonable. Why should we be in so desperate a hurry, when there was plenty of time to stay and see everything; he evidently did not understand, and doubtlessly came to the conclusion that those mad foreigners never can do anything leisurely.

At length, with a shrug of the shoulders which would have been accompanied by an exclamation of "God is great," had he been a Moslem instead of a Christian, he told us if we were determined to do Alcalá that same day, why then he would accompany us.

I felt for him, and duly appreciated his good nature in escorting us to see things that were so "muy feo." The vandalism of the present century has ignorantly, if not wantonly, destroyed this beautiful work of past ages. What would be the feelings of Ximenez, could he rise from his grave, and see the present state of the fair university, on which he spent so much care and wealth! Here he lived during his declining years, and here he used his best endeavours to promote the encouragement of learning and the success of his favoured university in the town where he himself had been educated. He also erected a lovely chapel, in which his remains were interred before the high altar; but his burial-place was not respected more than the sepulchres of other Spanish heroes in general, and a mass of crumbling ruins is all that remains of this once elegant temple.

When the university was removed to Madrid, the deserted buildings were disposed of, and many were turned into barracks: Alcalá being now a great cavalry station. The principal college of San Ildefonso was sold to a private individual of the name of Quinto, who commenced pulling it down; and when the work of destruction was considerably advanced, the worthy inhabitants began to think they might as well avert the impending ruin of the whole, and preserve some memento of their past history. Accordingly they repurchased it; but too late to save the chapel of the illustrious founder. His beautiful tomb was removed to the cathedral; and sad was the picture of ruin presented to us on entering this chapel. The pavement had been torn up, the altar

removed, all the rich stucco work pulled off from the walls, here and there an atom remaining to testify how rich were the decorations; the magnificent artesonado ceiling, with large cracks across it, now ready to fall—and all this not the effect of time, but of wanton downright destruction! The retablo and the reja have disappeared, and the naked walls bear testimony to the ruthless hand that has thus unsparingly despoiled them.

From the chapel we passed into the College of San Ildefonso. The deserted patio looks sad and lonely, and bears evident marks of the ill-usage it received after it was sold. The hall where formerly degrees were conferred has a fine ceiling, and the decorations of the galleries running round are very rich. The inhabitants of Alcalá, much to their credit, have had the good taste to place the sepulchre of Ximenez in the chancel of the cathedral, an old Gothic building. It is a beautiful marble tomb, the work of Dominico el Fiorentino, and is surrounded by a handsome iron railing. Beneath, a vault has been made for the reception of the Cardinal's remains, which are now in a leaden sarcophagus, deposited in one of the side chapels, awaiting the time when the Archbishop of Toledo shall come to preside in person over their transfer to the new abode prepared for them.

And there lies all that remained of the great Cardinal, one of the most remarkable men of his age. Stern and inflexible in character, he was great not only as a prelate, but as a statesman and a soldier; he was an unyielding despot, but guided by the highest and most unerring principles; his honesty and uprightness made him beloved and respected by all. His princely fortune was expended in doing good to those around him; and the University of Alcalá is the offspring of his magnificent encouragement of learning. It was in 1500, that he laid the foundation stone of the first college, and for eight years his unceasing

efforts were devoted to its progress. Established on the most liberal scale as far as the course of education was concerned, it soon became a favourite resort; and so great was the number of students within twenty years after its opening, that seven thousand came out to receive Francis I., when he visited Alcalá. Here it was that Ximenez welcomed his sovereign Ferdinand of Aragon, and showed him with pride the result of his labours during his retirement.

Another great and noble work occupied his leisure hours, the preparation of the celebrated Complutensian Bible, so called from having been printed here—Complutum being the ancient name of Alcalá. It was a princely undertaking; no expense was spared in the collection of the manuscripts, which were entrusted to the care of the most learned scholars for arrangement. Thus did Ximenes obtain the merit of being the first to compile a polyglot version of the Bible; but what would he have said, could he have foreseen how those valuable manuscripts would be treated by the heads of the very University he had founded with so much trouble, and at so much expense? Towards the end of the last century, when a German critic came to Alcalá to consult the original manuscripts, they were not to be found; the persevering German, however, was not to be so easily repulsed, and after pursuing his indefatigable research with a diligence which deserved a better reward, he discovered, to his bitter disappointment, that they had been sold, many years previously, by the librarian to a maker of fireworks.

On leaving this chapel, our little friend took us to see what was far dearer to his heart than the ruins of the University, a tablet in the Church of Santa Maria, placed over the baptismal font, recording that there Cervantes was baptized on the 9th of October, 1547. This brightest ornament of Spanish literature was born in

Alcalá de Henares, and its inhabitants have been lately endeavouring to preserve the mementos of the great writer. We went likewise to see the house in which he was born. The following inscription has been placed over the doorway :

AQUÍ NACIÓ
MIGUEL DE CERVANTES SAAVEDRA
AUTOR DEL DON QUIJOTE:
POR SU NOMBRE Y POR SU INGENIO
PERTENECE AL MUNDO CIVILIZADO
POR SU CUNA
A
ALCALA DE HENARES.

With honest pride, indeed, may the inhabitants of Alcalá claim Cervantes as their own, and well is it to preserve a souvenir of such a man. The house in which he died in Madrid, in the Calle Francos, was pulled down some years ago; but over the new one, erected on the same spot, is an inscription, recording that it was once the site of his abode, and that he died there in 1616. He was buried in the convent of the Trinitarias Descalzas, which occupied a different building originally to that where it now stands; and when the nuns were transferred to their new habitation, it is supposed his remains were likewise removed, but nothing is known of them. Such seems to be the fate of all great men in this country. The house where Lope de Vega lived and died, is in the same street; and although his remains were carried to the Church of San Sebastian, amid great funeral pomp, no monument was ever raised to his memory, and his ashes have mingled with those of the multitude. In a neighbouring street lived Quevedo, who died in poverty. Calderon de la Barca is the one who has been most honoured in death; he was buried in the Church of

San Salvador, and a small monument erected to his memory, beside which was placed a portrait of him painted during life. In 1841, this church was pulled down, and the remains of Calderon were transported to the new cemetery, outside the gate of Atocha. There is no Poet's Corner in a Spanish Cathedral, where the ashes of those who have shed lustre on her literature may rest in honour.

We went to the Primate's palace, where the Archbishops of Toledo used formerly to reside four months in the year; its square towers, with their leaden spïres, imparting a peculiar character to its exterior; the inner patio is quite lovely, a most exquisite specimen of that style commonly known in Spain by the name of "plataresque," where stone is chiselled into forms whose delicacy and richness rival the elaborate chasing of the silversmith. It was introduced about the commencement of the sixteenth century, when the glorious fretwork of Gothic architecture was enriched, and added to by Saracenic workmen. The "cinque cento," or "renaissance" style then crept in, and its plain classic outlines were wreathed with foliage and covered with an ornamentation, the detail of which seemed almost impossible to be executed in stone. But the effect of it is exquisite, as the many filigree façades which adorn the old buildings of Castile still attest; and in the days of Philip II. the classic style of Herrera introduced a new taste in architecture, and grand massive outlines usurped the place of the fairy tracing of the Berruguete school. But another architect arose towards the end of the seventeenth century, named Churriguera, who has contrived to leave a name identical with the most depraved taste; his overloaded decorations disfigured the interiors of churches, and spoiled the elevations of buildings; and to hear an edifice called Churrigueresque, is sufficient to stamp it as being in the worst style of art.

Later still, architecture relapsed into a plainness where

THE PALACE, MADRID.

the absence of ornament has been taken for simplicity, but where true grandeur and dignity are absolutely wanting. Unfortunately, Madrid contains too many edifices in this style, and thus, while every other city abounds in matchless specimens of architectural taste, the capital taking its rise during the seventeenth century, is not enriched with any monument that can reflect credit on the fine arts of the Peninsula. After examining all that was of interest, we bade farewell to our worthy cicerone, without whose kind assistance we should not have found our way about so well, and retraced our steps to Madrid where we had still much to lionize.

The palace is a noble building of white stone, occupying a commanding situation, and looks very imposing from a distance; it was commenced by Philip V. the ancient Alcazar having been burned down. It rises above the valley of the Manzanares, whose paltry stream does not present a very lively aspect from the windows. Bleak and arid is the view over that cheerless land of Castile, but in winter the snow-crowned summits of the Guadarramas present a grand boundary to the horizon. There are no gardens belonging to the palace; art has not endeavoured to conceal the deficiencies of nature; a small attempt is now being made to lay out something approaching to pleasure-grounds in the slopes just below, but the want of water renders such an undertaking very difficult of accomplishment. The great square called the Plaza de Oriente is fine, and contains a noble work of art in the centre—the equestrian statue of Philip IV., considered one of the finest bronze figures in the world, and in truth no pains were spared to render it so. It was cast at Florence by Tacca, after a design of Velasquez and a model by Montañes. The opera-house is opposite to the palace; and on one side is the national library, containing a most valuable collection of upwards of one

hundred and fifty thousand volumes: the coins too which are deposited here are magnificent.

But perhaps the sight of most general interest in the neighbourhood of the royal palace is the armoury. It was first arranged by Philip II., who caused the arms to be removed from Valladolid for the purpose. It is worthy of all the great names whose weapons are here preserved. A long line of equestrian figures, all in full suits of armour, occupy the centre, where they are displayed to the best advantage; while around, trophies are placed against the wall, and banners wave from the ceiling, overshadowing this most interesting record of the past history of Spanish chivalry. And what recollections are awakened, what thoughts of the past rush to one's mind, as the eye glances over the catalogue, a carefully compiled volume, and illustrated with short sketches of those who are mentioned in its pages.

The large number of suits of armour, marked as belonging to Charles V., call forth astonishment, all more or less beautifully chased and elaborately ornamented. This monarch took especial interest in finely-wrought armour, and this may account for the variety he seems to have collected. His son Philip II. also contributes largely; and the suits around belonged to heroes, whose actions are immortalized in the days of chivalry. One of the most costly and the most elegant is the panoply of Don John of Austria, who died at the early age of thirty-three, when he was commanding in the Netherlands, not without suspicions, as some historians have hinted, of foul play on the part of his brother Philip II.

The armour of the Duke of Alba, of Hernan Cortes, and Christopher Columbus, may here be seen. A beautiful suit belonged to Garcilaso de la Vega. The gentle and knightly poet, whose early death, caused by a wound

received in scaling the walls of Frejus, spread grief and mourning into the ranks of the Emperor's army. There is likewise the armour of Juan de Padilla, who headed the "comuneros" when the Castilians rose against Charles V., disgusted with the preponderance of the Flemings in the Councils of the State, the bad administration of justice, and a thousand other causes of complaint. Another hero of the same century, who signalised himself under the great Captain in the Neapolitan wars, was Garcia de Paredes; he seems to have possessed the strength of a Hercules, his most noted achievement having been performed at the bridge of Garellano, near Gaeta, where aided by only a few soldiers, he killed or put to flight four hundred Frenchmen, according to Spanish chronicles.

The well-tempered steel of Toledo has ever been highly prized, and swords may well be considered among the most interesting objects of the collection. Some of those in the Armeria Real are supposed to have belonged to heroes of almost fabulous renown; but the compiler of the catalogue fights manfully for their authenticity, and surely in such cases it is pleasanter to believe than to doubt. There is one in particular on which we must gaze with reverence; it is marked as belonging to Pelayo: his was the first sword that was bared, not only in defence of his country, but of his faith. It is said to have been treasured in the sanctuary of Covadunga, in the Asturias, until 1775, and then a fire breaking out, and consuming the building, the Abbot sent the sword of Pelayo, to Charles III., at the same time seeking assistance for the reconstruction of the sanctuary.

And here is another of ancient date with the words "Bernardo del Carpio" inscribed—a name which the charming poetry of Mrs. Hemans has familiarised to the English reader. With Cervantes, we may say, that "of

the existence of the Cid and Bernardo del Carpio there cannot be any doubt, although a great deal may be entertained of the wondrous actions they are said to have performed." Some archive of the old convent of Santa Maria de Aguilar says that Bernardo del Carpio was buried there; and as Charles V. went one day to visit his sepulchre, he saw the sword, and took it with him to place it in the royal armoury of Madrid.

Not far off is the Colada, the trusty sword, which the Cid Ruy Diaz won in battle from a Count of Barcelona; and here may be seen the one belonging to Suero de Quiñones, the hero of one of the most celebrated chivalrous exploits of the fifteenth century. Wishing to release himself from the infliction of an iron collar that he wore round his neck, every Thursday in token of captivity to his lady-love, he held the bridge of Orbiga between Astorga and Leon for thirty days against all comers. He was assisted by nine knights in this "paso honroso," as it is called in Spanish history. The case containing these swords possesses others of even more renown, those of St. Ferdinand, Ferdinand, Isabella, Boabdil, Gonzalo de Cordoba, Pizzaro, and others whose names have won an immortal place on the page of history. The sword which belonged to Francis I. when he was taken prisoner at Pavia is now no longer here; it was given up by Ferdinand to Napoleon, who thus parted with one of the proudest trophies of Spain's past glory; a fac-simile has been taken of it recently by order of the King, and occupies the place formerly held by the original.

Amongst other objects of interest are two bronze axe-heads, or "celts," as they are sometimes called, found in an excavation made in Galicia, where such weapons have often been discovered, as well in stone as in bronze. It would be useless to enumerate the various objects of beauty and of interest contained in this collection; to the

admirers of ancient armour it affords a rich treat, as well as to those who feel a pleasure in looking at objects which have belonged to celebrated characters. There is also another very interesting museum in Madrid belonging to the artillery.

The Plaza Mayor, or more properly speaking, Plaza de la Constitucion—although in Madrid the people have sense enough to call it by the former name, which is shorter and more to the purpose—is a handsome square surrounded by colonnades, and its lofty houses, with balconies running round each story, give it great uniformity. The only exception is the large building called the Panaderia Real, from the balconies of which the royal family witness the great fêtes that are occasionally celebrated in this Plaza. Of what varied events has this square been the theatre, since the days when it was completed in the reign of Philip III. The first grand procession it witnessed was the celebration of the beatification of San Isidoro, the patron of Madrid. Tournaments, executions, fêtes and festivals, and autos-de-fè, have all been alike celebrated in its ample enclosure. Here in 1812, triumphal arches were erected to receive the Duke of Wellington, and here it was that three days after his public entry into Madrid the constitution was proclaimed, the Plaza duly christened, and the marble slab located in its proper place, on the balcony of the Panaderia Real. In 1814 the stone was removed, and Ferdinand received with shouts of triumph as absolute Sovereign. Again replaced in 1820 ; in 1823 it was torn down by the French troops, when, as the poet says,

> Para hollar la libertad sagrada
> El principe borron de nuestra historia,
> Llamó en su auxilio la francesa espada
> Que segase el laurel de vuestra gloria.

The words Plaza Real remained in peace for some years, while the blood of Torrijos and others flowed upon the scaffold; but it disappeared again, when the Queen-mother found that advocating the constitution was the only means of establishing her daughter's throne. And there it stands at present waiting till some new revolution shall introduce some other favoured name to the Spanish people. The story of these little tablets in the Plazas of the Peninsula proclaim a strange lesson on the instability of their forms of government.

The royal bull-fights, which form part of any great festivities here, are always celebrated in this Plaza; they were held with great pomp on the marriage of the Queen and her sister, the Infanta. On these occasions the killing of the bull is performed by gentlemen, "caballeros en plaza," who mounted on beautiful horses, and dressed in the old Spanish costume, attack the bull and kill him; the professional "toreros" being in the arena ready to assist in case of emergency. The square, which is supposed to accommodate fifty thousand spectators, presents on these occasions a magnificent spectacle.

A TARTANA.

CHAPTER XIII.

El convento
* * * *
descuella desierto, solo,
desmantelado, en ruinas.
No por la mano del tiempo,
aunque es obra muy antigua,
sino por la infame mano
de revueltas y codicias.

DUQUE DE RIVAS.

THE MUSEUM OF PAINTINGS—START FOR BURGOS—ARANDA—PENARANDA—HOSPITALITY—FEUDAL MANSION—MISERY OF THE PEOPLE—ABUNDANCE OF PROVISIONS—CORUNA DEL CONDE—CLUNIA—PENALVA—ROMAN REMAINS—SCENERY—SILOS—RECEPTION—CONVENT OF SANTO DOMINGO—CLOISTERS—THE LAST OF THE ABBOTS—FERNAN GONZALEZ—LERMA—BURGOS—THE CATHEDRAL—THE CITADEL—SIEGE—ENVIRONS.

WE have taken but a hasty glance at the chief objects of interest in Madrid, but the most remarkable of all is the national gallery of pictures, which is, perhaps, unrivalled in Europe. Treasures of art are preserved in this Museum, which it would occupy months to appreciate, and examine with the care and attention they deserve. There are nearly two thousand paintings, and specimens of all the great masters of art adorn the walls, with a profusion which no other gallery can excel.

The wealth of Spain, at a time when painting was at its height, enabled her Sovereigns to command all the choicest works that could be obtained; and the taste and patronage evinced by the rulers of the House of Austria present a bright feature in their character. It displayed itself not only in the Imperial Charles, but serves to illume with a softening ray the morose despotism of his successor; and Philip IV. not only collected treasures of foreign art, but he had in his own country a galaxy of talent led by the pencils of Murillo and Velasquez.

This gallery owes its existence to Ferdinand VII., who contributed the necessary funds for its formation, after the idea had been suggested by his Queen Maria Isabel of Braganza. Until this period, these countless gems of art had been scattered through the numerous palaces of the Sovereign; but now they were collected in this edifice, which had been erected in the days of Charles III. for a museum of natural history. The building stands on the Prado; the exterior is tasteless and heavy, and the interior is not so well adapted as it might be for the display of the treasures which adorn its walls. Still the centre gallery is a noble room, and well lighted; it is devoted to the Italian school, while the Spanish paintings are arranged in two large rooms on either side of the circular entrance hall. To these, the traveller naturally turns, more particularly should his time be limited: the productions of the Italian and Flemish masters may be studied in the galleries of other European capitals, but it is in the metropolis of Spain alone that the pictures of her artists can be duly appreciated. Even this gallery is incomplete, as far as an historical illustration of Spanish art might be expected, and many painters of renown in their native provinces have no works to represent them in the National Museum.

Spanish art offers many peculiar features that give it

quite a distinct character from painting in Italy. No one who has ever even cursorily examined the works of artists in the Peninsula, can fail to be struck with the deeply religious tone pervading them. Painting here was truly the handmaiden of religion, and served to bring home to the mind of the Spaniards the various incidents of Scriptural events. On the walls of their churches, and over their favourite shrines, it spoke to them in a language plain even to the illiterate. The scenes there depicted, required no abtruse explanations, and the preacher had only to point from his pulpit to the canvas before him, on which were portrayed the sufferings of the Redeemer, the scenes in the life of his Virgin-mother, the miracles and the martyrdom of the Saints—in order to present a ready and a practical illustration of the doctrines he was seeking to enforce.

The long religious wars which called every nerve of Spaniards into action in the sacred cause of Faith—the long-continued presence of the Infidel at their very doors, clothed everything in Spain with the mantle of religion, and gave a tinge to the character of the inhabitants and the institutions of the country, for which it would be difficult to find a parallel resemblance in any other European nation. It was to place the Cross upon the towers of her cities, that her armies were led to victory; it was the banner of the Cross, that drew around it the various kingdoms, into which she was divided, inducing all to merge their differences, and unite in holy crusade against the Moslem; it was for spiritual, and not for temporal aggrandizement they fought—it was to the service of the Church that the first-fruits of victory were offered, and the first produce of the wealth of a newly-discovered world was dedicated to her service. The earliest efforts of the dramatists were devoted to mysteries, illustrating religious subjects; the finest architectural monuments were erected

for the mansions of her followers, and the worship of her faith; and to adorn her temples and her cloisters, the hands of the painter and the sculptor exerted the triumphs of their genius. This character has stamped everything in the Peninsula; and the Catholics of Spain might well look back with pride to the time, when all other things were considered secondary, as compared to the advancement of their faith and the triumph of their religion.

This tone of feeling which influenced the whole nation, was strengthened with a sad and gloomy severity when the Inquisition came into force, and sought to bind with all the trammels of discipline the genius which was eager to expand in the service of the Church. The strictest rules were laid down for the observance of artists, when treating of sacred subjects; the study of the human figure from models was forbidden, and the artist was obliged to seek for instruction in the works of his predecessors. The manner in which the great Italian masters handled religious subjects, offended the sterner morality of the Spaniards, who followed with due submission the rules laid down for their observance.

One remarkable difference is most striking in the treatment of pictures of the Virgin; and the admirer of painting in this country looks in vain for those beautiful feet in representations of the Mother of Our Lord, which form so exquisite a feature in the Italian paintings. In pictures of the Immaculate Conception, the favourite subject of Spanish artists, she is drawn standing on a crescent, dressed in blue and white, while the feet are always studiously concealed by flowing draperies. Even the custom of painting the Nativity without clothing the Child was thought worthy of reprehension; and many a dispute was carried on with regard to the propriety of portraying the Saviour on the Cross, attached by four nails instead of three. Rules were

established for the representation of angels, and all the accessories of sacred subjects. Besides these chains which fettered genius and restrained the free exercise of the imagination, many of the painters themselves were of a most religious turn of mind, and prepared for the execution of their works by prayer and penance, while some even belonged to the Church whose temples they employed themselves in decorating. Cano, Roelas, and Cespedes occupied stalls in the cathedral towns where they resided, and others of inferior note belonged to the monastic orders. Many followed their profession with so much pious enthusiasm, that they believed in the assistance of inspiration from on high; and the creations of their pencil were supposed to have been only the realization of visions, which had appeared to encourage them in the prosecution of their labours.

All these circumstances combined, have contributed to give a sombre cast to Spanish painting, and nowhere is it more striking than at Madrid where the halls that are hung with the productions of her artists, are in such close proximity to the gallery which glows with the profane beauties of Titian, and the bright and elegant creations of the Italian school. Here also may be seen the pictures of many whose works are little known beyond the Pyrenees; here may be studied the friars of Zurbaran, whom Philip IV. called "Pintor de los Reyes y Rey de los Pintores;" the productions of Juan Joanes, the great artist of Valencia, whose paintings bear more the character of Italian art than those of his countrymen in general; specimens of El Mudo, of the divine Morales, the great painter of Estremadura, of Ribalta, of Cano, the portraits of Cloello, and of Pantoja de la Cruz; and some splendid paintings of the great Ribera, whose disagreeable but powerful style is better known in Italy than that of other Spanish artists, for he resided long in Naples, where few

galleries are without some tribute from his studio, marked with the name of Spagnoletto.

Above forty paintings by Murillo adorn the walls of this museum; among them are two lovely Conceptions, floating in that glorious atmosphere which Murillo alone could paint, the joyous cherubs playing in the clouds amid which one can almost see them move, so aerial do they appear. The beauteous productions of Murillo may, however, be studied to as much advantage in his own native town, and the eye may turn from the golden colouring of this great artist to the canvas of another son of Seville, and rest on the sober tones of Velasquez. Only in Madrid can the works of this great painter be seen in all their glory, here he stands unrivalled, and above sixty pictures by his hand arrest the attention of the traveller.

Velasquez is an exception to the general remarks I have before made on Spanish art. For a wonder, his pencil was not dedicated to the service of the Church; he seldom painted religious subjects, and if he did, he generally failed in the attempt. He painted what he saw; man was his favourite study, and as a portrait painter, Velasquez stands almost without a rival. He was born in Seville in 1599, and early showed a love of art; he studied first under Herrera, whose academy he deserted for that of Pacheco, and devoted himself to the study of subjects from nature, painting many "bodezones," as pictures of still life are termed here. Velasquez in course of time visited Madrid, and was soon after appointed one of the painters to the King. His pencil was occupied in delineating the dull features of the members of the Austrian house; and the King was so charmed with his portraits, that he would not allow any other artist to represent him on the canvas.

Twice Velasquez visited Italy; and on his return the second time in 1651, he was appointed "Aposentador

Mayor," an office which gave him the superintendence of all Court ceremonials, and many duties to perform in the royal household. The last important scene in which he was engaged, and for which he had much to prepare, was the celebrated meeting on the Bidassoa, when Louis XIV. came to claim the hand of his bride, the Infanta Maria Theresa; and that marriage was solemnized which eventually transferred the crown of Spain to the house of Bourbon. Shortly after his return to Madrid he was taken ill, and died in 1660 in the sixty-first year of his age.

It would be difficult to particularise the works of Velasquez; all are beautiful; all deserve an attentive study. When were ever equestrian figures painted such as his? The Surrender of Breda is a noble painting, and the subject more advantageous than those on which the pencil of Velasquez generally dwelt, for certainly neither the Austrian family themselves nor their dwarfish attendants could inspire much enthusiasm in the artist; and the strange, stiff, ungainly fashions then in vogue only added to the natural want of beauty exhibited in the faces. And yet in this, perhaps, is the greater triumph for the artist, and he has indeed achieved one in the "Meninas," the far-famed picture which represents the Infanta Margarita, her pages, and her hideous dwarfs. The artist has here introduced his own picture, and it was on this portrait of himself that Philip IV. is said to have conferred the honour of knighthood; coming in one day when the picture was finished, he remarked that it was not yet complete, and painted the cross of Santiago upon the breast of the artist; a courteous homage paid by rank to the supremacy of talent. And such things were not rare in the princes of this house; the many speeches of Charles V. to Titian are well known, and duly chronicled. Philip II. loved the society

of artists, and Philip IV. sought repose from the cares of state in the studio of Velasquez.

The Italian and Flemish schools offer a perfect wilderness of paintings—all choicest specimens of their respective artists. Here the canvas glows with the heavenly Madonnas of Raphael, and the more earthly beauties of Titian; all the greatest names of Italy are assembled in this noble gallery, and above sixty pictures by Rubens are memorials of his visit to Madrid. To notice even the most celebrated of these productions would fill a volume, and this gallery must be visited and revisited many, many times by those who care to dwell upon its beauties. It is alone worth a pilgrimage to Madrid.

One or two more galleries in Madrid are deserving of notice; one belonging to the Academia de San Fernando in the Calle Alcalá contains two or three of the chef-d'œuvres of Murillo, and numbers of inferior paintings. The celebrated one known as the "Tinoso," representing St. Isabel of Hungary curing the sick, is a noble painting, but the disagreeable reality of the wounds makes it very disgusting, and most unpleasant to look at. The two other pictures, by the same artist, were formerly in one of the Seville churches, and with the Santa Isabel took a trip to Paris, and returned after 1815. They represent the vision which appeared to a Roman patrician, relative to the building of Santa Maria Maggiore, and nothing can be more beautiful than the delineation of the sleeping Roman, or the Madonna appearing in the clouds. This academy is in a most delightful state of disorder; pictures are crowded upon the walls, and packed into every corner, and all the rooms are filled and choked up with rubbish, looking as though they were never opened, unless some stranger sought to have a peep at their contents.

They have a botanical garden in Madrid upon the Prado, not far from the picture-gallery; the plants are

arranged upon the Linnæan system, and it is under the direction of a Scotchman, who does not seem very much impressed with the enthusiasm displayed in this country for flowers. It is, however, an ornament to the Prado, with its cast-iron railings surrounding the shady walls, and looks green and refreshing. The palace of the Dukes of Medina Celi stands on the Prado at the end of the Carrera San Geronimo. Some of the palaces of the grandees are splendid in point of size, but nothing can be plainer than the exterior. How different to the palaces of the old Italian nobles on the banks of the Arno! The gardens of the Buen Retiro, one of those numerous palaces which the sovereign possesses close to the capital, likewise skirt the Prado; they are considered by the Spaniards the ne plus ultra of perfection; and as things always go by comparison, anything in this country approaching to a garden is welcome to the eye.

On the Prado a granite obelisk may be seen peering through the trees, raised to commemorate one of the most important events in the history of this century. It covers the ashes of the victims of the celebrated Dos de Mayo, when the first signs of resistance to the French appeared, and the first blood flowed in defence of their country. It was after Murat had established himself in Madrid, and Ferdinand had been entrapped into visiting Bayonne, that the Infante Don Antonio, the only member of the royal family yet left in Spain, was ordered to leave Madrid. His departure was arranged for the 2nd of May, but when the carriage drove up which was to convey from the country the last remnant of their royal family, the full meaning of the French schemes, the consciousness that they had been betrayed, seem to burst upon the inhabitants, and a general movement took place. Seizing on any arms they could command, undaunted by the French troops which then occupied the capital, they

attacked their enemies, and fought with a desperation which proved the valour of the people, and showed how they could fight if they were only worthily commanded. One young man named Velarde headed the people, and persuaded a fellow-countryman of the name of Daoiz, who was in command under the French, to hold his post for the Spaniards; he did so, and with the few cannon they had at their disposal they defended themselves, with all the desperation of madness, against the overpowering force of Murat. They died at their post, the first who protested with their lives against the dominion of the usurper.

The streets of Madrid were deluged with blood, but the vengeance of Murat was not satisfied. On the following day all that were found with arms in their hands were led to execution; hundreds breathed their last upon the scaffold erected in the Prado, and the Puerta del Sol: but the brutality of the French recoiled upon themselves: the dying groans of the victims of the 2nd of May found an echo in the hearts of their countrymen, and deep and deadly vengeance was sworn against the oppressor. The events of this day are graven on the hearts of the Spaniards, and the Dos de Mayo is still celebrated as a national festivity. This small obelisk commemorates it in Madrid; and in Seville, the native city of Daoiz, a tablet to his memory was last year placed in the city walls, opposite the house where he had lived.

We visited Madrid twice, but paid such flying visits, that we had but little time to see more than the usual routine of sight-seeing, and take a passing glance at the society and gaieties of the Court. It was in the autumn of 1852 that we were last there, and were anxious to undertake our journey through Castile before the season got more advanced.

We left Madrid by the diligence at five in the morning,

the road as dreary as is usual in the Castiles. The aspect, however, gradually changed; we passed the remains of a fine Franciscan convent, situated amid a wilderness of oaks, and then descended on an extensive plain, in the centre of which stands the village of Lozoyuela, where we dined, and a most wretched place it was. The next stage was Buitrago, a pretty village on the banks of the little stream Lozoya. Its fine old walls and ruined towers show it to have been a town of importance in by-gone days. We soon approached the pass of Somosierra, or the Puerto, as they call these mountain passes in Castile.

It began to pour with rain, warning us that we were already in more northern lands, and the autumnal tints on the oak woods, with the wet leaves strewn thickly upon the ground, reminded one of home. In the south the leaves dry up and die almost upon the trees, but they do not assume those rich-changing hues which lend such a charm to forest scenery in damper climates. The thick mists prevented our seeing much of the mountains; on the summit of the pass Old Castile is entered. It was night long before we reached Aranda; the weather cleared up, and the moon shone in all its brilliancy as soon as we entered upon the plains.

Aranda is a small town, situated on the Duero. The façade of the great church is beautiful. The portal is most elaborately worked in the rich Gothic of the time of the Catholic Sovereigns, whose arms and badges are carved in stone; the interior is plain, but it has a fine retablo. The houses, with their wooden colonnades, are picturesque, but falling to decay. The convent of the Dominicans has become a ruin, nothing except the outer walls remaining. At Aranda we left the diligence, and taking horses rode to Peñaranda, about three hours distant. We passed through a flat cultivated

country, but some of the villages presented a very picture of misery and wretchedness, and the dirt was excessive. The women appeared never to have heard of the existence of such an article as a comb; such a contrast to the rich and carefully arranged hair of the Andalucian peasants. Arrived at Peñaranda, we were most hospitably received by the agent of the Countess of Montijo, to whom the place belongs. There are no inns in these unfrequented Castilian towns, but genuine hospitality is exercised by those who can afford it, and such a welcome is no uncommon thing in a country where roads are scarce and travellers few, but soon it disappears before the advance of railroads, and increased means of communication. I have before had reason to bear witness to the invariable kindness of Spaniards under such circumstances, and throughout Castile we received the same attentions, which had already welcomed us in the mountains of Andalucia.

We were unfortunately rather late in the season, and the wretched weather, which had greeted us as we crossed Somosierra, followed us throughout our journey, preventing us from seeing many places we had intended visiting. It detained us two days under the hospitable roof of our entertainers, where we lived, of course, in the primitive style still practised in these retired places. In the morning we partook of a cup of that delicious thick chocolate, which can only be enjoyed in Spain; followed, by the usual glass of water with its sugary accompaniments. These "azucarillos," as they are generally called, are made of sugar and white of egg, and when put into a glass of water, dissolve and give it a refreshing taste. At one or two o'clock we dined; about six in the afternoon, we had again a cup of chocolate, and at nine a regular supper; in the evening our circle was increased by the clergyman of the parish, and one or

two acquaintances of the family who dropped in. The house where we were staying, was in the Plaza; on one side of which stood the old mansion of the Counts of Miranda, Dukes of Peñaranda, and opposite a charming group of old tumble-down houses, the wooden work of the walls being filled up with every variety of brick and baked mud, forming a perfect picture for an artist. Behind rose the old towers of the castle, and to the right was the church, a large building in the Gothic style. The old castle must have presented a formidable appearance in ancient times; its long line of walls are now, however, in a very dilapidated condition. It was taken from the Moors in the twelfth century.

The more modern mansion of its proprietors is a very remarkable building, erected in the sixteenth century. Its façade is built with regular courses of rough stones, with a most elaborate doorway, surmounted by the arms of the family, and a bust of Hercules crowning the whole. The windows are likewise richly ornamented, each surmounted by a different coat of arms. Its external appearance bears the same stamp of desolation, as the interior of the building. Its fine patio is now used as a stable, the balustrades of its splendid staircase have disappeared, and its nobly carved wooden ceiling nearly all fell within the last few years. Enough remains, however, to impress the mind with an idea of its former magnificence. A long suite of rooms, now used as granaries, still retain their superb ceilings, which imitate in dark wood the rich stalactite work of the Alhambra, while the cornices and frieze which run round the walls also show that taste for arabesque ornaments, which in those days mingled itself with the Gothic.

Near the entrance to the Plaza stands a fine old Gothic cross, answering to our market-crosses in England. Here they are called "rollos," and are signs of the

jurisdiction of the lords of the village. The country people were all busily engaged at this season getting in their abundant vintage; the surplus produce of each year has to be thrown away, in order to make room for the new supply. There are no means of transporting it, and besides so little care is bestowed upon its manufacture, that it would neither be worth the trouble nor the expense.

The extreme poverty of the inhabitants of a land whose soil produces such rich harvests of corn and wine, offers a subject for much reflection. Castile is one of the finest corn countries in Europe; provisions may be obtained for a mere nothing; potatoes cost six cuarts the arroba (about a penny three farthings for twenty-five pounds of our measure); bread two cuarts per pound, and so on in proportion. The population is very scanty, quite insufficient for the area of ground they occupy; the people have plenty to eat, and yet the wretchedness and poverty can scarcely be surpassed. They seem to have no interest in improving themselves, and there is no one to look after or encourage them to exertion, and rouse the latent energy of the once noble Castilian character. They are likewise in the lowest state of ignorance; there are scarcely any schools, and the absence of all facilities of communication renders each village isolated and alone.

This portion of the country was much desolated by the civil wars; and in the house in which we were staying, Don Carlos slept when he was pursued by Espartero, in 1836, who was glad to avail himself of the shelter that had been afforded to his enemy, and slept in the same bed on the following night. We bid adieu to our kind friends at Peñaranda, our host himself accompanying us part of our day's journey. The weather was most unpromising, but we rode on over an undulating country; and it was impossible to resist smiling, when, on meeting a fine flock of sheep, our host informed me they were all

my own, as he placed them at my disposal in true Spanish fashion. At length we passed the village of Arandilla, and on the road our attention was drawn to one of those wooden crosses, erected to mark the site where murders have been committed ; here, however, it records the capture and execution of a Guerilla chief, a partizan of Don Carlos, who infested this country some years ago.

Just before entering Coruña del Conde, a village crowned with a pretty ruined castle belonging to the Belgida family, you pass a small church built with stones taken from the ruins of the ancient city of Clunia. The tiles employed here are of a reddish hue, which gives a bright tone of colour to the village when seen from a distance ; and the large bee-hive chimneys stamp them with a very peculiar character. On leaving Coruña we descended some very barren hills, on the summit of which stood Clunia ; there are but few remains of this old Roman city, here and there traces of old walls are visible, and some years ago a mosaic pavement was discovered, but it has been nearly covered over. The view from the platform, on which stood the town, is most commanding, embracing an immense extent of country. On the northern slope, as you descend into the valley, are the remains of a theatre, the seats of which are still preserved ; they are formed out of the solid rock. Not very long ago a marble statue and some weapons had been discovered in the plain below, and sent to Burgos.

We now descended upon the village of Peñalva de Castro, which is almost entirely built of old Roman stones. The walls round the church and the streets, if so they can be called, are choked up with huge blocks, covered with all sorts of inscriptions turned upside down, and in every variety of position. A small stone cross, a rollo, is made out of the shaft of an old Corinthian

column. We lunched here, and during the repast, which had been placed in our alforjas by the forethought of our friends at Peñaranda, many of the peasants brought us coins and entaglios for sale; the latter were few in number, and very bad in quality; they asked the most exorbitant prices, and were very independent, taking them away immediately when they found we were not to be so easily imposed upon. We bought two or three coins as a souvenir. We now bid adieu to our kind host of Peñaranda, who had escorted us thus far on our road to Silos.

We rode along through oak woods, interspersed with tall pines, while the cistus, juniper, and several varieties of heath, formed the thickest underwood. After passing the village of Arruazo, the road leads over such a delightful carpet of verdure until you arrive at a rocky glen; here the scenery was lovely, and we wound along amid the grey stones and bright foliage until we descended upon Doñasantos, another collection of mud hovels. Here rivulets stream down through every ravine, and the broken and mountainous character of the country was quite a relief to the eye after the interminable plains of the two Castiles. From Doñasantos we rode on to Peñacoba, which lies nestled at the base of tall white cliffs, with a large green sward in front, crossed by a purling brook, and overshadowed by forest trees. We skirted this village, which, at that distance, reminded us much of England.

After winding some time over barren heights, we saw the red roofs of Silos, and the large white building of its convent lying in a valley far below us. Through the kindness of a friend in Madrid, we had been well provided with letters of introduction for our tour, and very useful we found them. The parish priest of Silos gave us a warm welcome in his ruined habitation. We were

ushered into a large and comfortless room, where he sat in a stiff arm-chair behind a table covered with old worm-eaten books. There were a few bookcases and engravings of religious subjects round the walls; amongst others one of the late Bishop of Cadiz, who had once been Abbot of Silos. His bed was in a small alcove, and he had another inner room, where he kept many books and manuscripts. A small lamp shed a gloomy light over the apartment. We were lodged in one of the cells; and one might have expected to see the ghost of some Benedictine monk pacing the deserted corridor out of which our habitation opened. We had capital beds, and the chocolate prepared by the hands of a nice good-natured little girl, who acted as servant, was quite delicious.

The convent of Santo Domingo de Silos claims to have been founded in the sixth century by Recaredo, the Gothic King who abjured the Arian heresy, and did so much to promote Christianity within his dominions. Already possessed of considerable fame, large grants of land were conferred upon the monks by that hero of early Castilian history, the Great Conde Fernan Gonzalez. The superiors of this convent exercised a jurisdiction of life and death, until these rights were sold by one of the abbots to the Conde de Haro in 1431. The monks protested, in the reign of John II., against such an abandonment of their privileges, and it was finally arranged by the family of the Count paying them an annual tribute of one thousand three hundred and sixty reals, and as many maravedis. This establishment belonged to the Benedictine order, who founded their first monastery in Spain, in the Rioja, at the San Millan de Cogulla, and hence came the saint to whom that of Silos was to owe its renown.

Santo Domingo de Silos must be distinguished from the

far-famed Santo Domingo, who preached the crusade against the Albigenses, and whose followers lighted the fires of the Inquisition. The former was only a humble shepherd in the Rioja, a native of Cañas, near Nájera. He first became a hermit, and then entered the Abbey of San Millan de la Cogulla, of which he ultimately became the superior. More than once he resisted the encroachments of Garcia, King of Navarre, who sought to lay heavy impositions on the convent. On one occasion the church plate was demanded, which the Saint at last promised to have ready to deliver up to him on a certain day. When Garcia appeared, he found the Host manifested on the altar, upon which all the treasures of the church were displayed, and Santo Domingo informed him, he might take them if he chose; but his sacrilegious hands did not dare to touch the wealth thus guarded. Santo Domingo was, however, disgraced and removed from the priory, and subsequently he sought refuge at Burgos. The fame of his piety had preceded him, and Ferdinand I., Sovereign of Castile, received him with open arms, and shortly after made him Abbot of Silos, in the year 1046. He ruled the convent for two-and-thirty years, during which period, it is said, he worked innumerable miracles, and dying in 1073, was subsequently canonized by Urban II.

The line of abbots continued without intermission, until the final destruction of the religious orders in 1835, when Silos shared the fate of the remaining monastic establishments. At that period, our host, Don Rodrigo Echevarria, the last abbot, was made curate of the parish; and he still resides in his old convent, amid the solitude of its lonely and deserted halls.

The exterior does not present any architectural beauty; it is a heavy pile of buildings, with an enormous church erected towards the close of the last century. The walls

are bare and whitewashed, and in the centre a slab marks the burial-place of the patron saint; he was removed here from the cloister, where he had been originally interred. An iron gate leads into the sacristy, and beyond is a small private chapel; the walls are hung round with massive chains, the offerings of Christian captives, who had been released from prison by the miracles or the prayers of the saint. The rejas and other iron-work of the building were made out of chains thus procured; many have disappeared, but the number sent as votive offerings was so great that it became a proverb in Spain, when a person required an inordinate quantity of anything, "No te bastaran los hierros de Santo Domingo," (the chains of Saint Dominick could not suffice you). Some pictures representing his miracles still remain upon the walls, but there is not anything remarkable in an artistic point of view.

From this chapel, a richly ornamented Gothic portal leads into the cloisters, the great object of interest which this edifice still retains. They must be of considerable antiquity, and are generally supposed to be of the tenth or eleventh century, although there is not any authentic record of the date of their erection. They form a large quadrangle, ninety-two feet by one hundred and seven. The round-headed arches are supported by double columns, not more than six feet high. Their elaborately sculptured Byzantine capitals are exquisite, and display an endless variety of design, scarcely any two resembling each other. Seventeen double columns adorn two of the sides, and fifteen on the others; the centre group of columns on each side, differing from the remainder, and consisting of four and even five, most singularly twisted. The spaces between the arches are walled up to more than half the height, which gives the cloisters a very heavy appearance. The upper gallery is evidently of

much more modern date than the lower; the capitals are imitations, and executed in a very inferior style; it is likewise walled up in the same manner. There is a singular statue of the Virgin, of great antiquity and of colossal dimensions, and some curious ancient bas-reliefs representing the Crucifixion, the twelve Apostles, and scenes from Scripture, specimens of the infancy of art.

There is a something very melancholy about these cloisters. The hand of time has stamped them with characters peculiarly its own; and the dampness of the climate has added not a little to the look of antiquity which they wear. The fine rich-coloured stone is tinged with a yellow and a reddish hue, and the gloomy aspect of the place suits well with the decay of all around. The court is filled with weeds, green moss is creeping over the walls, and the cloisters of Silos are silently hastening to destruction.

The bad weather forced us to remain here longer than we had intended. The old Abbot was a well-informed man, and we spent our time very agreeably, listening to his tales about the convent, the long lapse of years during which it had enjoyed so much splendour, and its present ruin. It was sad to hear him moan over its fall, and point to the fruitful orchards around, which once belonged to his order. He gave us some of the most delicious pears I ever tasted, grown in the convent garden; but, "I have to buy them now," he added. He drew us a melancholy picture of the fall of the regular clergy; but, of course, as an interested party, his statement could not be considered wholly unprejudiced; and bitterly he complained of the manner in which the poor were neglected, and the insufficiency of the salary of the clergy, which prevented their doing so much good as they might in the way of charity. His pay as curate of the parish, was eight reals a-day (about eighteen pence); he told

us of all the dependents of the convent, who were formerly supported by the brotherhood, and who had now lost their means of subsistence. He was very anxious to hear all the news of the outer world, whose din and bustle but faintly reached his secluded dwelling, and talked with great delight about that "prenda nuestra," as he called Cardinal Wiseman; he seemed likewise much interested in a body of Spanish missionaries, who had lately gone to Australia, among them several of his old companions at Silos.

The poor Abbot was in a state of great distress about the village barber, who had died a few days before. There had been a grand "junta" of the village worthies, and on the following morning, to his great delight, one was to appear; for he had not been able to get shaved during this long interregnum. All these simple details amused us not a little. We walked through Silos; it did not look to advantage in the dense mist which shrouded the mountains, but the situation is very pretty. In these secluded valleys, removed from the high road, there are many convents scattered about. At the distance of a league and a half from Silos, in a wild glen, stand the ruins of San Pedro de Arlanza, likewise belonging to the Benedictines. It was the burial-place of the great Count Fernan Gonzalez, the founder of Castilian independence. Several ballads give the story of its origin; it was erected in fulfilment of a vow made by Gonzalez in one of his expeditions against the Moors. The building is fast falling to ruin, and we much regretted not being able to visit his sepulchre.

This great hero of early times seems to have been a very troublesome personage to the Kings of Leon and Navarre, who reigned at that time, and his numerous imprisonments and romantic escapes form the subject of many an old ballad. The Counts of Castile held their court

in Burgos; they were tributaries to the Kings of Leon, to whom they seem to have proved very turbulent vassals. Gonzalez having been taken prisoner by Ramiro, peace was made between them by the marriage of the Count's daughter, Urraca, to the heir of the throne. Civil wars ensued; and when Sancho succeeded, by the aid of the Moslem, in recovering Leon, in return for the support he had received, and to revenge himself on Fernan Gonzalez, he gave them full permission to ravage the Count's territories. The latter defeated them in many engagements, always, of course, opposing them with a very inferior force; but the disparity of numbers, which the Christian historians were wont to record in order to enhance their own victories, led them to the conclusion at which one of the chroniclers of Gonzalez arrives, when he says:

"La Rota de Cascajares
Es argumento evidente,
Que vale mas poca gente
Con Dios, que sin Dios millares."

After the Count's victories, Sancho sought to disguise his enmity, and sent to congratulate him, summoning him at the same time to attend the Cortes at Leon. Here, in order to get him once more imprisoned, he proposed his marrying Sancha of Navarre, whereupon the Count proceeded to Pampluna to claim his bride at the hand of her brother Garcia, little dreaming of treachery. On his arrival, he was thrown into prison, by order of the King, according to the arrangement that had been previously made with Sancho; he was, however, released by his intended bride, and they fled together to Burgos. Garcia, enraged at this, declared war against Fernan Gonzalez, but was defeated and taken prisoner, and was afterwards liberated at the intercession of his sister. The Count was once more entrapped by the King of Leon, and again

taken prisoner, when his wife flew to his rescue. Pretending to be on a pilgrimage to Santiago, she passed through Leon, and on her way asked to see her husband, which permission was granted. She then exchanged clothes with him, and remained captive while he escaped; but the King of Leon, on discovering the deception, sent her back, with all honour, to Burgos.

The remainder of his life was employed in wars against the Moors, who were gaining ground considerably in Castile; but at length worn out by age and infirmities, he died in 970, leaving Castile to his son Garcia Fernandez, and his country quite independent of the King of Leon. The romantic adventures in the life of this Castilian hero have been recorded in several ballads, and also in a rhymed chronicle. From being regarded as the real founder of the Castilian monarchy, his name is always recurring in this part of Spain, and his good sword is still preserved at Seville, as I have before mentioned.

The old priest said mass every morning at six o'clock in the little chapel leading out of the cloister, when in these short winter days it was barely light. Desolate were those cloisters in passing along them in the cold and wet, all in keeping with their ruined state. I have attended many grand ceremonials where pomp and grandeur displayed all that could captivate the imagination, but I never was present at so impressive a scene as that quiet early mass, offered up by this the last representative of a line of abbots who had governed Silos uninterruptedly for a thousand years. There was something so solemn, so calm, it inspired such true religious feeling; and around were numbers of country people, who came to worship before they commenced their labours for the day. The rain still continued, but we were obliged to leave; and it was with a feeling of regret that I left the convent of Silos, and

its secluded valley, so far from all the hum of the restless, busy world.

We rode along a pretty glen, passing one or two villages, but the weather was so bad, and the mist so thick, that we could not see any of the country round. It rained in fact as it only can rain in the South; where, when it does come down, it seems quite determined to make up for its rarity. The paths became regular mountain torrents, through which our horses waded up to the girths; and to make our ride still more pleasant, we lost our way. The man belonging to the horses had never been the road before, and we met no one to ask, while the various paths crossing each other made it very perplexing. After riding for some hours, we came to a village called Castrillo, which they informed us was considerably out of our way. However, they showed us the right road, and we were truly glad when we saw the town of Lerma in the distance. We arrived drenched, and not at all in a frame of mind, even had the weather permitted it, to do any sight-seeing in this ancient town. We preferred getting round the large and cheerful fire, which proved far more attractive than the deserted mansion of the great minister of Philip III.

For once all curiosity had vanished, and we were only anxious to get on to Burgos as quickly as we could. Riding is charming enough under a sunny sky, but in bad weather it is quite another thing, more particularly in a country where generally you have not any opportunity of drying your clothes, if you should be wet through. At Lerma, however, we were fortunate, and we found the advantage of those great bee-hive roofs which had attracted our attention so much in the Castilian villages. The room at the little posada in Lerma presented quite a joyous scene: on a raised platform, occupying a large space in the centre, was an enormous wood fire

crackling and blazing most cheerfully, the smoke escaping by the huge bell-shaped roof; several large saucepans, with the olla stewing, were ranged amid the ashes, and a large caldron full of water was suspended by a chain from the ceiling. We took our seats on the substantial wooden benches, arranged round the attractive centre, and joined the circle already assembled. We had a very tolerable dinner, and were glad enough to lie down upon the beds until the diligence passed. It passed through in the middle of the night; we lost no time in taking possession of the vacant seats, and were soon on our way to Burgos, where we arrived early in the morning.

Small and wretched as it is now, Burgos bears the impress of antiquity, and the grand gateway by which it is entered from the bridge, forms a fitting approach to so ancient a city. This is, nevertheless, a comparatively modern erection, of the time of Charles V., whose statue figures in the centre, supported on either side by Fernan Gonzalez and the Cid, while below are three other heroes of even earlier date in Castilian history. Its fine massive turrets give it an imposing appearance, and behind it rise the aerial pinnacles of the cathedral, with their exquisitely perforated stone-work. The exterior of this edifice is beautiful; a rich mass of florid Gothic, elaborately worked and overlaid with ornament, its lofty spires, and the dark-coloured stone of which it is built, make it very much resemble one of our own cathedrals. It is difficult to obtain any general view, from its being so crowded with old buildings. It was commenced in the reign of St. Ferdinand in 1221 on the site of the King's palace. The interior, as a whole, is very disappointing; it is narrow, and so choked up by the coro, and an unusual quantity of massive rejas, that it is quite impossible to embrace the whole. The church is in the form of a cross: it presents a strange mixture of plateresque

and Gothic; the cupola is of more modern construction, and is the work of Felipe de Borgoña, who lies buried here.

The gem of the cathedral is the chapel of the Constable of Castile, the great family of Velasco, Counts of Haro. The exquisite white stone of which it is built shows off to much advantage the delicate sculpture, all the lace-like borders to the arches, and the figures with their heraldic devices which adorn it. There is a lightness and an elegance about this chapel seldom to be met with. In front of the high altar are the tombs of the founder and his wife, which were executed in Italy in 1540. Their marble figures are reclining, and admirably executed; there is likewise in the chapel an enormous block of jasper. A lovely picture of a Magdalen is in a small sacristy, a good specimen of the Italian school. It would be endless to detail all the objects of interest enclosed within the walls of this cathedral, the many sepulchres, the chapels with all their rich details; every gateway is a study, and the exterior certainly has no equal in Spain.

One cannot but lament the absence of painted glass, which would so materially improve its internal appearance; but the plain glass windows are among the many mementos of the French invasion. When they abandoned the fortress in 1813, they attempted to blow up the castle, and an explosion took place which destroyed all the painted glass windows. The inhabitants in the present century were not as ready to replace this loss as their ancestors in former days, when the cupola fell in 1539; then, every possible exertion was made to repair the damage, and the present splendid structure soon rose on the ruins of the former one, the architecture not perhaps strictly in keeping with the remainder of the edifice, but attesting the taste and magnificence of the

age of the Imperial Charles. The richly-decorated portals of the façade were removed in 1794, and their present bare appearance spoils the magnificence of the remainder. To the north, another elaborate portal may be seen, called the Puerta Alta. It is decorated with the statues of the twelve Apostles, and a staircase leads down from it to the floor of the cathedral, above which it is raised nearly thirty feet. Close by is another enriched doorway, called the Puerta de la Pellegeria, more in the plateresque style; and here the exquisite pinnacles of the Constable's chapel form a becoming termination to the building. The arms and figures sculptured on the back of this chapel are magnificent.

Adjoining the cathedral are the cloisters; small and much enclosed, but very handsome; they are crowded with old tombs. Leading out of them is the sacristy, filled with portraits of the Bishops and Archbishops of Burgos down to the present day. In another small chapel, now used merely as a passage leading to the archives of the cathedral, is the tomb of Juan Cuchiller, the attendant on Enrique III., who sold his coat to procure a supper for his royal master, at the time that the feuds and rapacity of the nobles had reduced the Crown to such a state of poverty, that the Sovereign had no funds wherewith to keep up the dignity of his establishment.

An interesting relic is preserved here; it is an old worm-eaten oak chest, which has the magic words written under it, the coffer of the Cid. Fortunately, it is fastened against the wall high up beyond the reach of romantic souvenir-loving travellers, who might wish to detach a trifling morsel as a recollection of this old Castilian chief. We ascended to the summit of one of the spires, and the beauty of the statues which decorate its pinnacles, and the ornaments and detail of its

parapets and buttresses, well repay one for the ascent. Burgos has, however, several objects of interest besides its cathedral, although its finest convents are destroyed, or converted to purposes for which they were never intended. The citadel crowns the hill which rises behind the town; within its walls stood the Alcázar, the residence of its ancient rulers, but no traces of it now remain. All appears wretched and deserted, although it is still a fortress, and permission must be asked of the officer on guard before strangers can be permitted to enter.

The view is extensive and pleasing, disclosing scenes replete with many historic recollections. To the east in the distance rise the hills of Atapuerca, where Garcia, King of Navarre, fell in battle against his brother Ferdinand, the first monarch of Castile. To the south, the craggy rock of Carazo, noted in tradition as the site of a Roman temple. The heights of Carazo have retained their renown even in more modern days, for here, during the Carlist war, Balmaseda fortified and entrenched himself, committing atrocities which were of no uncommon occurrence in those domestic feuds. To the west, the remains of the Moorish Castle of Muñon still remain, another conquest of the Castilian Count. The river Arlanzon flows along the valley through well-cultivated meadows, amid the shade of trees which fringe its banks. In the neighbourhood of the town rise two large groups of buildings; one the royal nunnery of the Huelgas, founded by Eleanor of England, the wife of Alfonso VIII., the other the Hospital del Rey, erected at the same time, and dependent on the Huelgas. Above the town the spires of the cathedral appear; and on a distant hill may be seen the pinnacles of the Cartuja of Miraflores. Close below is the arch erected by Philip II. to the memory of Fernan Gonzalez,

a tasteless unmeaning-looking thing. To the right is the cemetery, where the tombs covered with wreaths of everlastings, and the flickering candles with which they were adorned, reminded us it was All Souls' Day.

Burgos itself is as dirty and miserable as any town can well be; it is small, but the towers of the numerous convents and churches, and the façades and patios of some of the houses, indicate its former importance. The Casa del Cordon, formerly belonging to the Constables of Castile, is now inhabited by the Gefe Politico, or civil governor. Many of the façades of the houses in some of the streets behind the cathedral are richly ornamented, and the small projecting towers of some are very curious. But few noble families now live in Burgos; and although the residence of a Captain-General, there is little or no society, all is as dull as the appearance of this cold venerable old town could lead one to expect. As it is on the high road to France, the inns are rather better than the generality. It is almost the only place where we were asked for our passport throughout the whole of Spain. They seldom trouble foreigners about these things in this country, although in case of accidents it is, of course, always prudent to be on the safe side and be provided with one. And it may also be mentioned that—except in cases of cathedrals and churches, when of course special leave is necessary—I have never been prevented drawing wherever and whenever I pleased; nor have I ever heard in Spain that permission from the authorities was requisite for the purpose. Formerly it doubtless was so, while the civil war was yet recent; but in the present day, artists may sketch all through the Peninsula, without meeting any interference from officials, save now and then, perhaps, their keeping off from him the annoying pressure of the too curious crowd.

The greatest annoyance in Spain, is the constant

opening of the luggage; on arrival at any great town, all the boxes are inspected; but if the traveller will only make up his mind to bear it patiently, he will find it a mere matter of form, nothing is ever touched, and it is not at all necessary to pay the officers; a little civility goes a great way in the Peninsula. We invariably escaped very well, and the immense quantity of luggage we were tormented with, from the size of Mr. Tenison's Talbotype apparatus, rendered us very suspicious-looking personages. In fact, it made us the general subject of attention wherever we went, and attracted an immense crowd in the streets whenever the mysterious-looking machine was put up. Many were the remarks that were made upon it in the different towns through which we passed, and much it excited the wonder of the admiring crowd, who could not imagine the its object. "Es musica?" asked one little urchin; some more curious than the rest would offer as much as three-pence, to be allowed to have one peep; and our servant only allayed their curiosity by informing them it was a new machine for roasting chesnuts! Sometimes Mr. T. would let them peep through the ground glass, after the picture was removed; but they were intensely disgusted at not seeing anything but the objects before them turned upside down.

This old city, although it is situated on the high road to France, is decidedly very much behindhand in many ways, more particularly if one may judge from the style of the carriages. We hired one to go to Miraflores and San Pedro de Cardeña, two most interesting excursions in the neighbourhood.

SIMANCAS.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Y á San Pedro de Cardeña
Mando que mi cuerpo lleven,
Que es monesterio en Castilla
Donde quiero que le entierren;
Y á Dios pido mi perdone
Cuando d'este mundo fuere."

ROMANCERO GENERAL.

"And when he arrived at the town which is called Simancas, two leagues from Valladolid, where the King's Court was, God permitted, and the misfortunes of the Island of Heremon would have it, that he should take the sickness of his dissolution."—ANNALS OF IRELAND.

SAN PEDRO DE CARDENA—THE CID—HIS TOMB—MIRAFLORES—CONVENT OF THE HUELGAS—VALLADOLID — DEATH OF COLUMBUS — INQUISITION — SAN PABLO — SAN GREGORIO — CATHEDRAL—COLLEGE OF SANTA CRUZ—PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURES—HERNANDEZ—JUAN DE JUNI—ENGLISH AND SCOTCH COLLEGES—RECEPTION OF A NUN—AN EXCURSION—A TARTANA—SIMANCAS—THE SPANISH ARCHIVES—BURIED LORE—RED HUGH O'DONEL—FRANCISCAN CONVENT — LEON—COMFORTLESS QUARTERS—THE BRASERO.

OUR vehicle was like a large omnibus; of a very primitive construction, and unfortunately the roads were in a still more primitive condition. The jolting as we crossed these rude mountain tracts, was enough to dislocate

all one's joints, and shake one to pieces. At length we reached Miraflores, and began to indulge ourselves in the pleasing prospect of resting for a short time, but our coachman would not hear of such a thing; he declared the English always stopped there on their way back, so he insisted on our doing the same. Remonstrance was useless; therefore we obeyed, and continued over barren downs, our vehicle often threatening to upset us, until we arrived at the Convent of San Pedro de Cardeña, sunk in a dreary naked-looking dell, a very scene of desolation, fit abode for votaries of seclusion and mortification. The modern appearance of this building is rather startling at first, for one naturally expects the building which contains the tomb of the Cid to bear some traces of antiquity; but it has been modernized, and bears evident marks of being an erection of the last century. The hand of ruin has now, however, stamped it as its own. San Pedro de Cardeña has lately been sold to some private individual; but the present owner can now only guard the monument of Spain's great hero, his ashes have been taken from their resting-place, and now find a temporary asylum in the house of the Ayuntamiento in Burgos.

Placed under the same rule as the monastery of Silos, Cardeña claims its foundation likewise in the sixth century. Tradition says, that Theodoric, the son of one of the Gothic kings, was killed, while out hunting, on the site it now occupies. His mother, Sancha, caused him to be buried in a hermitage near the spot, and afterwards founded a monastery, which she entrusted to the Benedictines. History records a dreadful massacre which occurred here in the ninth century, during one of the forays of the Moors, in the days of Alfonso the Chaste, King of Leon, when two hundred monks were put to death in cold blood, and the edifice razed to the ground. But the most remarkable event in the annals of this

monastery, was the opening of its doors to receive the remains of the favourite champion of Spain, the great Cid, Ruy Diaz.

By many considered a fabulous hero, he is now generally acknowledged to have been a real character. Clothed in all the romance which tinges the early ballad history of nations, his actions were undoubtedly exaggerated and embellished to suit the taste of the age, and increase the admiration of the people. He has become the beau ideal of Castilian knights; the largest number of ballads on any one subject is devoted to his exploits; an ancient chronicle records the events of his life, and the earliest poem in the Spanish language is dedicated to the Cid Campeador. It is a charming production of those rude but chivalrous days, breathing in simple language the heroic spirit of the times, when loyalty and religious enthusiasm formed the leading features in every Castilian's character.

The Cid died in Valencia in 1099 His body was conveyed to San Pedro de Cardeña, which had ever been a favourite convent of his. He and his faithful Jimena were buried before the high altar of the church; and however restless may have been the life of the Cid, his remains appear to have been destined to enjoy as little tranquillity.

His monument now stands in a small side chapel. The effigies of the Cid and Jimena are placed side by side on a stone pedestal; on the upper part is engraved the following inscription, placed there by order of Alfonso el Sabio:

Belliger invictus, famosus marte triumphis
Clauditur hoc tumulo magnus didaci Rodericus
Obiit era M.C.XXXVII.

Below are several other inscriptions of modern date. A dog, the emblem of fidelity, is placed at the foot of

Jimena. On the walls around are blazoned the arms of many of the Cid's relatives and companions in arms, with the names inscribed beneath. This tawdry chapel was erected by Philip V. in 1736, who moved thither the remains of the Cid. Never were the ashes of any hero exposed to such vicissitudes. Originally interred before the high altar, they were removed by Alfonso el Sabio. In 1447, their position was again altered, but Charles V. had them replaced; whence they were afterwards taken, and they remained in peace until the new chapel was prepared for them by Philip V. But even in this chapel, he could not be allowed to rest; when the French were in possession of Burgos, their general, seized with a sentimental fit, transported the remains of the Cid to the grand promenade along the banks of the Arlanzon, where the tomb was arranged. Here, however, they remained but a short time; once more they were transferred to the monastery, and here if possible in their first resting-place one would wish to leave his ashes in repose, but in 1842 the poor Cid was again removed to Burgos to be deposited in the house of the Ayuntamiento. The marble tomb in the monastery of Cardeña remains an empty sepulchre; the convent itself will not long survive the spoliation of its hero's tomb, and this spot so renowned in tradition, so famed in the national poetry, so full of great and glorious souvenirs, will before long for ever disappear from the soil of Castile.

On our return, we stopped at the great Carthusian monastery of Miraflores founded in the reign of Henry III. In architectural beauty, it has not so much to excite the admiration of the traveller, as most Carthusian monasteries, but it contains a tomb which makes it well worthy of a pilgrimage. Here is the sepulchre of John II. and his wife, Isabella of Portugal, the parents of the great Isabella. It stands in front of the high altar, and is an

octagon marble pedestal, on which lie the effigies of the Sovereigns. It would be almost impossible for any description to give an idea of the beauty of these tombs; never was alabaster more exquisitely moulded; a profusion of figures and foliage, and countless ornaments are worked upon it with a prodigality and a richness quite unequalled. The figures of the Sovereigns too are very fine, but the elegance of this gem of art has not preserved it from mutilation; and the iron railing, which is placed so near it as to conceal its beauties, has not been sufficient to defend it from sacrilegious hands. The tomb of their son, Alfonso, is placed in the wall to the right of the altar, and is likewise of elaborate workmanship. Those works were executed in 1493, by the father of Diego de Siloe, and were offered as a pious tribute by Isabella to the memory of her father.

The retablo of the church was gilt with the first gold of the New World that was presented to the Queen, and which she devoted to this purpose. The paintings which adorned the Cartuja at Miraflores have disappeared; all the jewels were carried off by the French in 1808, when the convent was sacked after the entrance of Joseph into Burgos. Three old monks are now the sole occupants of the vast building, and one seemed still to moan over the days when he was living according to the rules of his order. It was in vain that we tried to impress upon him that he could now talk as much as he liked; the poor old man sighed for the times that were past.

A stone crucifix stands at one corner of the cloisters, and a small iron cross marks the burial-place of the last Prior. The grass is growing wild in the open space, and around nothing but decay. The same mysterious silence pervades it now as when the cowled monk walked stealthily along its sheltered corridors; but although

prayers and hymns of praise may no longer resound in the vaulted church, some respect seems to have been shown to this sanctuary of kings, and Miraflores has as yet been spared from sharing the common ruin, or the indignity of being converted to some unworthy purpose.

Miraflores was a favourite resort of the Spanish Sovereigns. A hunting-seat of Henry III.; it was presented to the Carthusians by his son John II., who desired to be interred within the walls of the church, which he himself had erected. A fire consumed the edifice, and it was some time after his death before his remains were deposited there.

Isabella, on her triumphal entry into Burgos in 1483, stopped at Miraflores, and wished to see her father's tomb; but as it was within the walls of the convent, over whose threshold the foot of woman could not pass, the cenobites were rather perplexed, and wished to make an exception in her favour, as their Sovereign. On hearing this, however, she declined, saying, "that she trusted Providence would not permit vows to be broken on her account, or the rules of the order to be violated." Isabella may, in fact, be considered as the founder of this convent, and indeed she would not allow any one to share the honour with her, for it is said that on seeing one day that the arms of Aragon and Sicily had been blazoned with her own, she exclaimed in indignation that she would not permit any but her father's arms to be placed in the church which contained his sepulchre. Much as she loved and respected her husband, she had that Castilian pride which always showed itself tenacious to a degree of any interference with her own dominions.

Burgos seems rich in royal convents, for near the town, in the plain watered by the Arlanzon, stands the nunnery of the Huelgas, founded by Alfonso VIII., at the instigation of his wife, Eleanor of England. It was com-

menced in 1180, and inhabited by nuns of the Cistercian order. It is a singular building, or rather groups of buildings, and is more like a large village surrounded by walls, presenting specimens of architecture of every age. The superior was a mitred abbess, and ruled over fifty-one villages; her jurisdiction was independent of any diocese, and her power, both spiritual and temporal, exceeded that of any abbess in Christendom. All this is now a mere shadow; the nuns still retain some possessions, but compared with what they once enjoyed, it is as nothing. None but ladies of noble blood are admitted, and many of the Infantas of Castile have ruled within its walls.

There are still several nuns in the Huelgas; we paid one of them a long visit, at the reja—for no one, either male or female, is permitted to enter within its walls without a royal order. I never met any one who so thoroughly enjoyed talking; she touched on politics, scandal, and everything in succession with a rapidity which showed that her seclusion from the world had rather increased than diminished her affection for hearing of its frivolities. She was very good-natured, and came down to the church to undraw the curtain that we might peep through the iron railings, and see the tomb of the founder. Above the high altar, waves the banner taken from the Moors at the Navas de Tolosa. It is a fine church, but it was too dark to see it to advantage, and we could only just catch the vision of a kneeling nun by the dim lights burning before the altar. They have a curious high head-dress descending in a peak on the forehead, and they wear a black mantle over the white robe of their order.

The Church of the Huelgas has been the theatre of many interesting events in Spanish history. Within its walls Saint Ferdinand knighted himself, while his mother,

who had so nobly made over to him her own right to the throne, fastened on his sword. Here, too, our Edward I. was married to Eleanor, daughter of the sainted monarch, and received knighthood from the hands of her brother, Alfonso el Sabio. This church witnessed the coronation of several Castilian sovereigns, amongst them of Henry of Trastamara, when he commenced his wars against his brother. There are many other convents in Burgos, but few are worth visiting.

We had now seen as much as our time would allow us of this venerable old place, where the first Cortes, which assembled in Spain, held its sitting in 1169, and which was the nucleus of that Castilian power, destined eventually to unite under its sceptre all the various monarchies of Leon, Aragon, Navarre, and the vast territories which once owned the Moslem sway. Burgos now barely contains a population of ten thousand inhabitants. It seems to possess no sign of life within it. The weather too was unfavourable when we were there, and contributed perhaps to make it more gloomy than usual—the leaves lay scattered thick under the trees along the river, and the cloudy sky above formed no very cheering prospect, after the bright days of the South.

The diligence road from Burgos to Valladolid, runs along a wide valley, more liveable and more cultivated than the usual wastes of Castile. It is a capital road, and we performed the distance of twenty-two leagues in twelve hours. We dined at a wretched place, called Torquemada. On approaching Dueñas, the traveller's attention is attracted by a splendid canal, which shows signs of industry and commerce, something unusual in a land whose staple produce seems to have been monastic buildings. As usual, it is not finished; such works never are concluded in Spain. Dueñas is a

curious town, people seem to live under-ground, in the hill sides; and the chimneys spring from the earth in an extraordinary manner.

Valladolid is a large and imposing town, compared with the decayed city of Burgos, and has altogether a more modern and civilized appearance; many of the streets are wide, and have been considerably modernized. The row of shops under the colonnades of the Plaza, are very handsome, and look well filled with French goods; next to Madrid, as far as one can judge by the display in the windows, they certainly appear better than in any other town in Spain, that I have yet seen. Here and there may be found some picturesque bits, but they are few and far between; all the old bridges over the Esgueva, a stream which runs through the town, have been cleared away, and the Esgueva itself covered over; this, although a considerable improvement in some respects, has destroyed many a pretty picture. Valladolid is a very old place, but a large portion of it was destroyed by a terrible conflagration in the reign of Philip II., after which the present Plaza, and many adjoining streets were built.

It claims as its founder the Count Pedro Ansurez, to whom it was ceded by Alfonso VI. This powerful noble contributed much to the embellishment of the town, and erected the bridge which now crosses the Pisuerga, the Church of the Antigua, and many other edifices. In the year 1208, on the death of one of his descendants, the lordship of Valladolid reverted to the Crown, and it became afterwards a favourite residence of the court, which was finally established there during the minority of John II. It was here that Christopher Columbus expired in 1506, his later years clouded by the ingratitude of his Sovereign; and here, in the year 1527, Philip II. was born. The rejoicings in celebration of his birth were

postponed in consequence of the taking of Rome; and the Emperor ordered prayers to be put up in the churches for the speedy deliverance of the Pope, whose release depended only on a stroke of his own pen. In 1536, Charles entered Valladolid again, but not now with all the pomp and splendour of an Imperial court; he was on his way to the cloister of San Yuste, to finish a career of unparalleled glory by one of prayer and religious seclusion.

Valladolid was one of the strongholds of the Inquisition, which was established in 1500. A modern historian of this town says, it was first established in the Calle del Obispo, in a house now occupied by the Academia de las Nobles Artes, where still, on the blackened walls of the subterranean chambers, may be traced inscriptions, probably the effusions of some of its victims; the style and language of many of them, being in Latin, proving them to have been written by people of the better class. Many were the autos-de-fè, held in this town in presence of royalty; the "Campo Grande" being the scene of the fires, which consumed alike the followers of Luther and the persecuted race of Israel. In those days none were safe from this dread tribunal; the slightest taint of heresy was sufficient to draw a suspected person within its vortex, and the most learned and the most pious, against whom no charges could possibly have existed, fell victims to a tribunal, which was frequently made the instrument of private vengeance.

The scene of their autos-de-fè is now the grand winter promenade of Valladolid, a portion of it having been laid out as an Alameda. It is a fine open space, surrounded by buildings, most of which were convents; and here Napoleon reviewed upwards of thirty thousand men. This, however, as a walk, is not to be compared in beauty with that of the Moreras, which lies

along the banks of the Pisuerga. Valladolid stands in a fine valley, bordered by low hills; and the river which waters it, is really a noble stream. The Alameda of the Moreras has a fine broad walk, interspersed with seats; it takes its name from the rows of mulberries, which are planted along the green bank that slopes down to the water's edge, and enjoys the most delicious shade. Crossing the bridge, and passing the quays of the canal, we climbed the height where stands the telegraph. The view extends over an immense plain, intersected here and there by low ranges of hills, which separate the different valleys, and in the distance the blue mountains of Avila bound the horizon. The situation seems well adapted for a great capital.

The royal palace is now deserted; built by the great Cardinal, Duke of Lerma, it became royal property. Nothing can be plainer than the exterior, and the interior is wretchedly furnished, wearing an air of most uncomfortable neglect. One of the King's sisters, the Infanta Josefa is now residing there, in a sort of honourable exile, having married far below her rank. Opposite to the palace is the elaborately worked and magnificent façade of the church, formerly belonging to the Dominican convent of San Pablo, one of the most highly ornamented specimens of the period, when Gothic architecture was enriched in a fantastic manner, and overloaded with a luxuriance of decoration. No one can form an idea of the detail of this façade, the whole surface of the stone is sculptured, and surmounted by the arms of the Duke of Lerma. He and his Duchess were buried in this church, but their fine monuments have been removed to the Museum. The interior is simple, but of fine proportions; it had cloisters attached to it, but they have now entirely disappeared, the materials having been found useful for the construction of a new prison in the Campo Grande.

The adjoining college of San Gregorio, has escaped destruction, having been converted into the palace of the civil Governor. Some formal modern windows detract very much from the beauty of the elevation. In the gateway, Gothic architecture displays itself in all the quaintest forms of the transition style; wild men with clubs under canopies adorn the sides, while in the centre the royal arms, supported by lions, are placed amid intertwining branches of strange-looking trees, and a sort of rustic stone-work crowns the whole as a parapet. This college was commenced, in 1488, by one of the princely prelates of those days, Alfonso de Burgos, Bishop of Palencia, and it took years in building. The cloisters are among the most exquisite in Spain, perhaps in Europe. They consist of two galleries, the lower formed by thin and lofty spiral columns. Round the upper, runs a richly sculptured balustrade; its arches subdivided by tiny columns, and the intervening stone-work covered with delicate wreaths of foliage, cherubs and other ornaments. The effect of the whole is beautiful, but considerably marred by the glass, which the Governor, with a view to his own comfort, has had placed in the openings. One side has escaped this vandalism, and stands out in all its pristine beauty.

We were most kindly received by the Governor, who showed us through all the rooms, some of which bear traces of their past magnificence. A long saloon, out of which two smaller ones opened at either end, had once a most gorgeous artesonado ceiling; but I grieve to have to say it exists no longer. For some reason or another, difficult to be accounted for, the people took into their heads it was falling, and in order to settle the matter without any trouble, it was taken down; but we were told that far from being in a ruinous condition when the workmen commenced operations, the pieces of wood of which it was

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composed were so firmly united, that they had the greatest difficulty in displacing them. The hall was entirely in ruins when we were there, preparatory to being fitted up in modern Spanish style.

The street which leads from here to the cathedral has lately been baptized with the name of the Calle Reinoso, in compliment to one of the members of the Bravo Murillo cabinet, who had purchased the corner house, and was, of course, for the time being the especial object of adulation of his fellow-citizens. The cathedral might have been very splendid, had it been completed according to the original design. The interior is sombre, breathing the very spirit of him who built the massive church of the Escorial; the huge blocks of granite, without an attempt at ornament, inspire a certain feeling of awe at the massive proportions of the edifice, but it excites no admiration. The paltry altar, with its whitewashed walls, are unworthy of such a temple, and its unfinished state, both inside and out, leaves an unsatisfactory impression on the mind. It contains the tomb of the first Lord of Valladolid, Pedro Ansurez, and some one or two fine paintings of the Italian school. In the sacristy is preserved the beautiful silver custodia of Juan de Arfe; but little else remains of the former treasures which this church possessed before the French invasion.

Not far from the cathedral is the lofty tower of the Antigua. Built in the eleventh century by Ansurez, it is the earliest specimen of church architecture in Valladolid; and its numerous round-headed windows and scaly roof make it very peculiar. We could not see the fine retablo, from its being concealed by draperies prepared for a funeral ceremony.

The Colegio de Santa Cruz is an imposing edifice, with its parapet and buttresses; over the portal it is enriched in the plateresque style. It owes its origin to

the great Cardinal Mendoza, and Isabella assisted in person at the opening. Paintings, sculptures, and carvings, from the many ruined convents of Valladolid, are here collected in most admired disorder; and the few good things amongst them, are almost lost amid the rubbish thus assembled, and no attempt at classification has as yet been made. The director, Don Pedro Gonzalez, complained with much bitterness of the want of funds, and of the utter carelessness and indifference of both officials and people to encouraging anything connected with the fine arts, or the preservation of antiquities. He seemed really to appreciate them himself; but what can one person do where there are so few to second him?

On entering the patio, or cloister, it seems more like a curiosity-shop than anything else. One of the gems of the museum is the carved choir, removed here from San Benito; it is the work of Berruguete; the stalls are most beautifully sculptured, and the arms of the various Benedictine convents in Spain are carved over the seats. In the centre of the hall are bronze figures, richly gilt, of the Duke of Lerma and his wife; he was the well-known favourite and prime minister of Philip III., and when he foresaw his approaching disgrace, he wisely provided himself with a cardinal's hat, and ended his days in dignified retirement at Valladolid. Some large paintings, said to be by Rubens, are hung upon the walls; they were brought from the nunnery of Fuen Saldanha in the neighbourhood. Here and there a painting shines out from among the rest; but the principal attraction of this museum is the collection of painted wooden sculpture.

This art, so peculiar to Spain, may here be seen in perfection, although the figures have certainly not gained by their transfer from the altars of the churches

to the shelves of a museum, where they are placed in the most heterogeneous confusion. Made for particular purposes, and adapted to the site for which they were sculptured, when placed together like so many wax figures, all the poetry is lost, and the effect entirely destroyed. The eye becomes bewildered, and can hardly render justice to the bold and energetic productions of Juan de Juni, or the more graceful and devotional works of the pious Hernandez. These two artists were the great ornaments of the school of Castilian sculpture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The life and origin of the former seems enveloped in some obscurity; but his style tends to credit the belief that he studied on the classic soil of Italy. Hernandez proved a worthy successor to Juni, and has left many proofs of his genius in the town where he resided. He died in 1636, after a life divided between the exercise of his art, and works of religious devotion, preparing himself for the execution of figures, which were to adorn the altars of the churches, by prayer and mortification.

There is a fine Mater Dolorosa by Juan de Juni preserved in the church of the Augustias, called La Señora de los Cuchillos, from the long silver knives placed in her hand. The face expresses the bitterest anguish and sorrow, and with eyes upturned to heaven, portrays the depth of human grief.

We also went to see the English college, and were most kindly received by the rector, who has resided there for upwards of twenty years. The building presents nothing remarkable; it contains a neat octagonal church, which had been undergoing repair: the corridor is hung with pictures of some who are said to have suffered martyrdom in England in the days of Elizabeth, many of whom were educated within its walls. This college,

dedicated to St. Alban, was founded by Philip II. for the education of such Roman Catholics as could not receive instruction in England, in order, that when duly trained in the principles of their faith, they might be able to instruct others on their return to their own country. There are now but thirteen students. Another college, founded with similar intentions, was given to the Scotch in the last century, and both are possessed of considerable lands in the neighbourhood, which are much better cultivated than the properties round them.

The rage for taking the veil is prevailing as much here as in other places; we went to see a novice enter the convent of Santa Ana, and the ceremony was performed in the church, and not within the convent, as is generally the custom. The lady, who was anything but pretty or prepossessing, was very gaily dressed, and in such joyous spirits, that one might have imagined she was doing it rather out of bravado than influenced by any better feeling. She knelt before the altar, while the officiating clergyman gave us a long lecture on the vanities of the world, and the beauty of a life of seclusion and penance. He then placed a crucifix in one of her hands, and in the other a torch, and her head was adorned with a large crown of roses. I felt sorry I had not a small looking-glass to offer her, for she seemed so anxious it should be arranged becomingly, that she gave the crucifix to a friend to hold while she settled it herself. After this was adjusted to her satisfaction, she walked out of the church in procession, and entered the convent. The crowd rushed to the iron railings to see her give the embrace to the nuns. The curtain rose, and she then appeared in her white dress, and made her bow to the world, while the spectators left the church highly edified with the proceedings.

Valladolid does not seem more lively than Spanish

towns in general. It has a theatre, a plaza de toros, but very little society. We spent one very pleasant day in an expedition to Simancas, where the archives of Spain are preserved. We had a most charming vehicle for our excursion, what is called here a "tartana," a small omnibus with a canvas covering, and no great abundance of springs. It was got up quite regardless of expense, and lined with satin, and trimmed with all manner of fringe and tassels. We had two horses at starting, but when we had left the town a third was brought out, which, being left to its own devices, took its own line of country in a most independent manner, at one moment threatening to take us into a ditch, at another up a bank. The road leads along near the river, and was one continued succession of ruts the whole way to Simancas. We stopped to take a sketch of the town, which has an imposing appearance from a distance, with its long bridge; but of all wretched, miserable places, when you once reach it, I never saw its equal. We were obliged to leave our elegant equipage at the bottom of the hill, and we ascended to the castle through streets, ankle-deep in mud.

We had a letter to one of the officials, who escorted us over the building; where the archives are deposited. He declared there was not anything to see, that all those little packages of papers contained positively nothing. To do him justice, he seemed in most blissful ignorance of the value of their contents. In this uncomfortable manner we passed through forty-three rooms, in which ninety thousand packages of paper await the investigation of the curious. The ground was strewed with above thirty tons of documents, all relating to the Inquisition, which had but lately arrived from Madrid. Of all uninteresting rooms to walk through, those containing records are the most tiresome: all the packets ticketed and put

in their own little compartments, looking as though they were settled in peace and quietness for life, without any intention of being disturbed. There is something so foolish in this negative inspection, the tickets conveying no meaning to the eye, which longs to penetrate their dingy covers and glean some information from their silent contents. They remind one of those quiet people, one meets occasionally in the world, so cold and impenetrable that there is no making anything out of them, although, as a consolation, you are always assured there is a great deal in them. So it is with these musty records, in which there is doubtless much concealed that might reward those who would take the trouble to cultivate their acquaintance, and in both cases you long for the talisman that would unravel the mystery in which they are shrouded.

As we were leaving, we met the Secretary, who asked if we had seen some curious documents, which he mentioned, and to which of course we replied in the negative. He then escorted us back through many mysterious corners and up winding staircases into a small octagonal room, where the wills of some of the Spanish Sovereigns are preserved. We glanced through those of Isabella, her grandson Charles V., and we likewise saw the capitulation of Granada, signed by Boabdil. The accounts of the Great Captain were likewise exhibited, accounts which were so remarkably extravagant that the "Cuentas del Gran Capitan," became a bye-word in Spain for any unusual expenditure of money. Simancas is an old town, and its strong castle, once belonging to the Henriquez, was afterwards used as a state prison by the Sovereigns of Castile, and Philip II. had the archives arranged here. It may have answered very well for this purpose, when the Court held its residence at Valladolid, but now it is at a most inconvenient distance from the capital.

Simancas possesses an additional interest in the eyes of visitors from Ireland, as having been the place where Red Hugh O'Donel died in 1602, when he came to Spain after the triumph of the English arms at Kinsale, to seek for aid at the Court of Philip III. Although he did not obtain the assistance he sought from the King, he was honoured in death, and interred with great pomp, as it is related by the ancient chroniclers in their own simple style:

"And when he arrived at the town, which is called Simancas, two leagues from Valladolid, where the King's court was, God permitted, and the misfortunes of the island of Heremon would have it, that O'Donel should take the sickness of his dissolution; and after lying seventeen days on the bed, he died on the 10th of September (1602), in the house which the King of Spain himself had in the town of Simancas, after lamenting his crimes and transgressions, after a rigid penance for his sins, after making his confession without reserve to his confessors, and receiving the body and blood of Christ, and after being duly anointed by the hands of his own confessors and ecclesiastical attendants, Father O'Mulconry (then confessor and spiritual adviser to O'Donel, afterwards Archbishop of Tuam on that account), and Father Maurice Dunlevy, a poor friar of the order of Saint Francis, from the convent of the monastery of Donegal, which town was one of O'Donel's fortresses. His body was conveyed to the King's palace at Valladolid, in a four-wheeled hearse, surrounded by countless numbers of the King's state officers, council and guards, with luminous torches, and bright flambeaux of beautiful wax lights burning on each side of him. He was afterwards interred in the Monastery of St. Francis, in the Chapter precisely, with veneration and honour, and in the most solemn manner that any of the Gaels had been interred

in before. Masses and many hymns, chaunts, and melodious canticles, were celebrated for the welfare of his soul; and his requiem was sung with becoming solemnity."

Not a vestige now remains of this Convent of Saint Francis. It has been swept away from the earth; modern houses and crowded streets now occupy the site of this ancient edifice. It was founded by Berenguela, in 1210, she, who abdicated the crown in favour of her son Saint Ferdinand. The monks were first established on the banks of the river, about a quarter of a league from Valladolid, in the time of Alfonso el Sabio; its inmates were removed by his wife, Doña Violante, to the interior of the town, near the great plaza, where the Church of Santiago now stands. A portion of it was devoted to a royal palace, and here Maria de Molina died; and it is often mentioned in the history of Valladolid.

All traces of these things have now vanished, and the ashes of Hugh O'Donel have shared the fate of many heroes of the land in which he died. Spain is a country where the remains of the dead are less respected than in any other, and where, as we have seen, even from the days of the Cid, they have been changed about, or scattered to the winds, as each succeeding revolution has swept over the land. After the usual round of the churches has been gone through, there is little to tempt the traveller to linger at Valladolid, and we turned our eyes towards Leon.

We took the "berlina," or coupé of the diligence, which fortunately happened to be vacant; the chances being against us, as we had to take it up as it passed through from Madrid. We started in the evening, and passed Rioseco in the dark, a town formerly of some importance. If the whole journey could have been performed at night, it would have been all the more agreeable, for uninteresting as La Mancha and the

Castiles are generally, the journey from Valladolid to Leon surpassed in dull monotony anything we had yet seen. There was not the slightest undulation in the ground to relieve the eye, and the misery and poverty of the inhabitants of the villages through which we passed, formed a fitting accompaniment to the dreariness of the country. Here and there you see small bee-hive-looking places, subterranean cellars, where the produce of the vintage is preserved. The whole distance is three-and-twenty leagues, and the sameness of the scene was only varied about three leagues before we reached Leon at Mansilla, a village surrounded by old walls.

Crowds of country people were assembled, at a large fair which was being held, and the scene was very picturesque and animated; the men wore every variety of hat, from the old pointed peaks, with their silky tufts, to the modern pincushion sombrero, which has not, however, become so much the fashion here as in Andalucia. They were enveloped in dark brownish cloaks, apparently the natural colour of the wool; the women had gay-coloured petticoats and wooden shoes, something like the French sabot, called here "madreñas," which are universally used in Leon. We took up several passengers, and all the remainder of the road met troops of country people flocking into Mansilla with their horses and mules for sale. It commenced pouring in torrents, and the weather, which gave us so unhospitable a greeting upon our arrival in Leon, never condescended to clear up entirely during the ten days we remained there.

The town is rather well situated, on the slope of a low hill, with a rich valley before it, the towers of the cathedral forming a prominent feature in the landscape. It is rather disappointing on a first view, after the lovely spires of Burgos. Our arrival, too, was not the best calculated to give us a pleasing first impression of this venerable city.

There were no rooms in the posada where the diligence stopped; we had fortunately been recommended to a private house by a friend of ours, and started off in pursuit of more comfortable quarters. After some difficulty in finding the house, we were welcomed by a most civil little woman, who seemed anxious to entertain us as well as she could; she had, however, but little at her disposal, and that little was of a very primitive nature. She had only one room to offer us with two alcoves in it, but we discovered a small closet for the photographic apparatus, and settled ourselves with becoming resignation. The preparations for our ablutions were not on a very extensive scale, one of those mysteriously shaped basins used by barbers with a piece cut out of the border to admit the chin, and which the sorrowful knight mistook for a helmet, was all we could obtain. Neither candlesticks nor lamps abounded, but the woman of the house suggested they were not necessary; and spilling a few drops of wax on the floor, stuck the candle upright—a thing which though apparently easy we did not prove adepts in imitating.

As to comfort, it would be vain to expect it in a Spanish house during such weather. In the south, where winter lasts so short a time, one can understand its being more advisable to make preparations against heat, and submit to the cold; but here, in the north of Spain, where the winters are longer, and the climate much more resembling that of England than of Andalucia, it seems strange they should not take more precautions to make themselves warm within their houses. The doors and windows let in the air in every direction, and then they have nothing but the "brasero" to heat the room.

There they sit shivering, their shawls and cloaks wrapped round them, trying to avail themselves of the small amount of heat its ashes diffuse. Sometimes they

place it under a table pierced with holes, and well covered down to the ground with thick green baize: when seated at the table, the warmth to the feet is very pleasant. Foreigners in general do not approve of the "brasero," the heat is not sufficient, and the charcoal affects the head; and although from habit I have got rather to like them than otherwise, when you only require a trifling degree of warmth, I cannot praise them so enthusiastically as a native of the country would do; I hope, therefore, I shall be excused when I allow a Spaniard to speak for himself on this subject, and transcribe the following description from the pages of a modern author, whose satirical sketches of life and manners are much admired by his countrymen in the present day.

"The 'brasero' is a thing so purely Spanish, that it will be vain to look for a word answering to it in any foreign language; not being good hands at translations, we aspire, although unworthily, to the name of originals. It is nevertheless true, although much to be regretted, that if things take their present course, the country of the Cid will soon have but little left peculiar to itself: the laws, the literature, the manners and customs of our ancestors will disappear, and even now there is not much remaining.

"When that day comes, the 'brasero' will be put aside, as an old-fashioned piece of furniture; its place will be filled by the French or English fire-place; the small brass shovel will yield to the bellows, and we shall blow the fire instead of scraping the ashes together.

"While this sad event is impending, and in case to-morrow should witness its fulfilment, it does not appear to us out of place to leave some description of it stamped upon these pages, in the same manner that the dexterous sculptor impresses on wax a countenance which is about to be buried in the earth.

"Were we etymologists or genealogists, we might, perhaps, decide the quarrel between Covarrubias, who maintained that 'brasa,' and consequently 'brasero,' come from the Greek 'bras;' and other authors, who declare the Spanish word to be the legitimate daughter of the Latin 'urasa,' which is descended in a direct line from 'urere;' but thanks to Heaven, we are far from lovers of such nice distinctions: we incline to more tangible proofs, and are willing to suppose cold to be the true cause and origin of the 'brasero,' and consequently we do hereby confess and believe as an article of faith, that if there had not been such a thing as winter, the 'brasero' would never have been invented.

"So far so good—'who invented it?' we shall be asked, and we will answer in a straightforward manner, 'the first person who felt cold.' Adam was the first man who became subject to all the miseries to which flesh is heir; one of those miseries was doubtless cold, ergo, our father Adam, the first who felt cold, was without doubt the inventor of the 'brasero.'

"This discovery, like every other, underwent a progressive development; we see the vine-leaves gradually transformed into the Roman purple; and thus the 'brasero,' which began probably by being a stone pierced with a hole, became in time a most elegant piece of furniture. Already in the sixteenth century a law was enacted to this effect: "We hereby command that from this time henceforth no brasero of any form whatever shall be made of silver." This law has naturally become a dead letter, for the motive which dictated it has passed away, and silver now is not so abundant as to be employed for 'braseros.'

"With the lapse of time this primitive custom was changed and altered according to the different countries, climates, and laws enjoyed by man, but one and the same

truth was always recognised; that in order not to feel cold, it was necessary to burn some combustible material. In this all have agreed; they have differed only in its application: some burning the branches of oak, others the trunks; some vegetable coal, others mineral; in short, all have made use of that which was most easily obtained.

"So much for the material; as to the form, it would be endless to describe the variety of shapes assumed—the principle may be reduced to four. The blazing hearth in the centre of the room, the fire-place at the side, the stove and the 'brasero.'

"Give me the Spanish 'brasero,' pure and primitive type! with its simple circular stand, its white ashes, its red-hot charcoal, its exciting shovel, and its protecting wire-work cover; give me its gentle, tranquil heat, the centre towards which sociability converges, its circular accompaniment of joyous faces. Give me the mutual confidence which its mild warmth imparts, the equality with which this is distributed; and if, between two lights, give me the tranquil brilliancy diffused by its bright-red coals, softly reflecting the fire of two Arab eyes, the transparency of an oriental skin.

"It is true that the aristocratic fire-place contributes more to the embellishment of splendid rooms, it spreads a higher temperature around, and there is no doubt that its lively, restless, fantastic glowing flames rejoice the sight of the peaceful spectator. But in exchange, what a tiring glare for the eyes! what burning flushes in the cheeks! And when it smokes (which often happens), and the wind and rain come down the chimney! and then what risk and alarm when the flames catch the tails of a coat, or the flounces of a dress, or when it alarms and compromises the safety of the neighbourhood by ascending its hollow way to visit the interior of the walls, and illuminate the tiles of the roofs!

"Besides, how can the fire-place be compared to the 'brasero' under a social aspect?

"In the first place, the fire-place is unjust, and a lover of exclusiveness; it confers all its favours on the two fortunate beings who are seated on either side, saluting the rest of its worshippers but slightly; the 'brasero,' on the contrary, is socialist, and distributes its benefits equally to all its members. The fire-place is semi-circular, the 'brasero' round and eternal, like all circles, without beginning or end; the fire-place burns without warming, the 'brasero' warms without burning. The fire-place requires all the 'entourage' of a modern throne, with its responsible ministers of poker, tongs, and shovel, to seize and collect; its brush to sweep; its fender to guard it; its public opinion to fan and rouse it by means of the bellows; its responsibility, which vanishes in smoke—the patriarchal 'brasero' reigns and governs alone, or at most with its small brass shovel for a sceptre.

"And if you examine it, solely under the aspect of tending to the confidence of love, you must still give the preference to the 'brasero.'

"Let us picture to ourselves two lovers, in the first bloom of their rising affection, seated opposite each other on each side of a fire-place; to begin, they are two yards distant from each other, which is not convenient for telling secrets, (you might as well deprive the olla of salt, as love of secresy.) In the second place, they are ensconced in two enormous and softly-cushioned arm-chairs; their faces cannot endure the brilliancy of the flame, and their flushed cheeks take shelter behind the shade of a screen, or the projecting corners of the chimney-piece; take away the expression of the features from love, and it loses its firmest support, for the countenance is the responsible editor of love.

"Then if the gentleman has to kneel, his garments are

endangered by coming in contact with the black-lead of the hearth, and if he has to surprise a careless hand, his own comes in contact with the poker and tongs.

"Around the 'brasero,' on the contrary, there can be no fear of such disagreeable accidents; there a tiny foot is not removed above an inch from one of more masculine proportions; and it is so easy to shorten that inch!—two snowy hands are extended over the burning ashes, exactly opposite two others clothed in the whitest gloves, and it is so natural to shorten distances!—and then several things must be examined, the quality of those gloves, the shape of the jewelled rings; a look of intelligence is exchanged, some other pretext is discovered, and farewell to the snowy hand which—has melted with the heat of the 'brasero.'

"The magic influence of this piece of furniture has likewise a soporific quality, which works upon the heads of guardians and duenas, inducing them involuntarily to take refuge in the arms of Morpheus; and if to this influence should be added that of a Madrid newspaper, lopped of its leading article by the unsparing axe of the Government censor, the effect is certain, and all fall asleep, from the watchful grandmother to the purring cat.

"All these advantages are possessed by the national 'brasero.' We are told, it is true, of treaties and protocols arranged by grave diplomatists in the chimney-corner; but in truth, those which are settled over the 'brasero' are not less important, while the hands are carelessly giving a pyramidal form to the heated charcoal, and the small shovel is passing lovingly over the ashes.

"We see, therefore, that neither in a social nor in a political point of view can the beneficent influence of the English fire-place be compared to that of the Spanish 'brasero.' As far as economy is concerned it must have the preference, being more within the reach of all, and

more certain in its effect; and as far as regards shape it must carry away the palm.

"And yet, in spite of all this, the 'brasero' is disappearing as knightly costumes have disappeared; and cloaks and mantillas are vanishing, as well as the patriotism of our ancestors, the faith of our forefathers, and our own national belief. And the foreign fire-place, the exotic bonnet, the uncivilized great-coat, the laws and literature of strangers, and the customs and languages of other people are possessing themselves of that society which disowns its own history, of that ungrateful child which affects not to remember its ancestors. Let us assist, therefore, at the last leave-taking of the 'brasero,' but before we say farewell, we must bestow on it a gentle tribute, as is the custom of those about to inter one who is deceased:

"May its ashes be light!"

EL BRASERO.

CARRO CON BUEYES

CHAPTER XV.

Los siglos á los siglos se atropellan,
Los hombres á los hombres se suceden,
En la vejez sus calculos se estrellan,
Su pompa y glorias á la muerte ceden:
La luz que sus espiritus destellan
Muere en la niebla que vencer no pueden,
Y es la historia del hombre y su locura
Una estrecha y hedionda sepultura.

El Diablo Mundo.

CITY OF LEON—CATHEDRAL—BISHOP'S PALACE—BEGGARS—CASTILIANS; THEIR CIVILITY AND PRIDE—CHURCH OF ST. ISIDORE—ROYAL TOMBS—OX-CARTS—MARAGATOS—THE CONSTITUTION JEALOUSLY GUARDED—ENJOYMENTS OF TRAVEL—NATIONAL CUISINE—CROSS THE GUADARRAMAS—THE ESCORIAL—ITS ORIGIN AND VICISSITUDES—GRANDEUR OF ITS CHURCH—A MUSEUM OF RELICS—CHAPEL OF THE SANTA FORMA—THE MAUSOLEUM—CORO—LIBRARY—THE VILLAGE INN.

We established ourselves very tolerably in our new abode, and joined the circle in the evening round the brasero. There was also another lady staying in the house, the wife of an "empleado." She was a Madrileña; and the poor woman was always sighing over the luxuries of her beloved Madrid, and the misery of

being banished to such a place as Leon. It is, in fact, nothing better than a large village, and its chief population seem to be the staff of clergy attached to the cathedral, an establishment once well befitting the capital of a kingdom, but existing now in utter mockery of its present fallen state.

Oviedo was the first capital of the infant sovereignty of the Christians, as they were struggling for independence in the mountain fastnesses of the Asturias, but by the beginning of the tenth century they gradually extended their conquests, and established their court at Leon. In those days, Leon was often taken by the Moors, and reconquered by the Christians; it was captured by the great Almansor in 996, who razed it to the ground; but it was soon after rebuilt, and remained the seat of government until the death of Bermudo, last King of Leon, in 1037, when Fernando, King of Castile, united it to his own dominions in right of his wife, Bermudo's sister. The two crowns were at times again divided, until at length they were finally united by St. Ferdinand in 1230.

The cathedral is here the first object of interest. After Burgos, the exterior is disappointing; the large towers, of a rich-coloured stone, are surmounted by spires which do not rise to a sufficient elevation. There is a beautiful rose-window over three noble arches, which form almost a portico, so deeply recessed are the doorways within. Between these large arches are the lofty, narrow-pointed ones, which produce a most original effect. The interior is lovely; it grows upon you each successive time that you enter it, and in elegance and lightness it stands unrivalled. It is narrow and lofty; and before the lower tier of windows were blocked up, it must have appeared as though it had been built of glass. It is a miracle of architecture; and on a first visit, you are not sufficiently

impressed with the slightness of the walls, making one wonder how the building could have stood so long in this stormy climate. This is the type of the light and elegant in architecture, as Seville is of the massive and imposing: it would be impossible to compare the two, except as they form a contrast to each other. Both are beautiful; and in Seville you may feel overwhelmed by the sombre majesty which clothes religious worship in its severest form. In Leon, the heart looks upward with joyousness, and the fairy columns and variegated windows make one think of the worship of a God of peace and love.

I spent many hours drawing within its walls; and every hour I lingered there, I admired it more and more. It has but three aisles, and there are no side chapels, which is unusual. Formerly there were two rows of painted glass windows, but the lower row has unfortunately been blocked up; the cloisters having been built against the walls on one side, and the other probably arranged to correspond. Such painted glass windows are seldom seen, the colours vie with those of the rainbow, and the deep tones of the reds and greens are unsurpassed; would that the glorious rays of the sun, as they strain through, could fall upon the beautiful cream-coloured stone, in all their changing hues; then, indeed, the effect of those windows would be unrivalled; but, alas! the hand of a barbarous taste has passed over its walls. The interior has been whitewashed, and all the delicate capitals coloured with a yellowish tinge. Man has done his best to injure the beauty of this temple—but it triumphs still.

Beneath the clerestory windows runs a gallery of double-pointed arches with a decorated parapet, apparently almost the only solid piece of masonry in the walls, for the windows are so large, and so close together, it seems hardly possible that the roof can be supported by any-

thing so fragile. There are chapels round the apse, and at the back of the high altar, is the tomb of Ordoño III., who died in 923, and is supposed to have been the founder of the original edifice erected on this site. The present cathedral appears to have been erected towards the close of the twelfth century. A story is told that Ordoño, after one of his victories, desired his chaplain to prepare the best edifice in Leon, and consecrate it as a church. The worthy priest hurried back, and not finding anything better adapted for his purpose than the King's own palace, instantly took possession of it, and the story goes, that his royal master, on his return to his capital, was not overpleased at finding his orders had been so literally complied with.

It is dedicated to Santa Maria de Regla, and the well-known saying gives it the following place among the Spanish cathedrals :

> Sevilla en grandeza, Toledo en riqueza
> Compostella en fortaleza, Leon en sutileza.

There are no iron screens either before the high altar or the choir, which gives it additional lightness. Lovely as these rejas are, they choke up the churches, and it is quite a relief not to see them. An enormous retablo, richly gilt, disfigures the high altar, being much too heavy for the building, and in the worst taste. A richly-sculptured silver tabernacle is placed in the centre, and the view from hence, standing behind the altar, is charming, facing, as it does, the exquisite rose window over the principal entrance. The trascoro is ornamented with the most splendid alabaster sculptures, adorned with gilding ; it produces a very rich effect, but this is considerably injured by a large blue door, which the canons have put up to make their stalls warmer and more comfortable. The cold of this cathedral is intense, and

to that I can fully bear witness, for although one of the canons, whose acquaintance we made, was extremely kind, and used to have a good hot "brasero" placed close to me while I was drawing, my fingers were nearly frozen. The thinness of the walls and the quantity of glass, must cause this peculiarity, for, generally, churches are the coolest places in summer, and the warmest in winter.

The services are very well performed, and I have seldom seen in Spain a more devout congregation, than were assembled there on Sunday. The sacristy does not contain anything worth seeing; all the plate vanished during the French invasion. The chapel of Santiago is very elegant, of the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, and if possible, the windows surpass those of the cathedral. The adjoining cloisters are very large, forming a most delightful promenade for the chapter. The Gothic arches are supported by elaborately decorated, plateresque pilasters. An exquisite staircase, highly ornamented, leads up to the Sala Capitular; from the windows you look out upon the old city walls, which now run through the centre of the town; in fact, these walls join on to the cathedral, and continue along the southern side. On the side of the cathedral, opposite to the cloisters, stands the Bishop's palace, and although I have witnessed many scenes of wretchedness and misery, I never saw such beggars as came out of that palace early one morning, when we happened to be passing. Such bundles of rags, such a mass of dirt and poverty! They were the very picture of distress; they had all been to receive the weekly charity of the Bishop, and never was charity more required, if one might trust to appearances. They all had the usual wooden shoes, which one feels half disposed to envy them in the muddy streets of Leon; they are not allowed to wear them in the churches, on account of the clatter they make.

The Plaza in front of the cathedral, is barely large enough to obtain a good view of the edifice, and Mr. T. was obliged to put up his instrument on the balcony of a chemist's shop opposite. Nothing could equal the civility of the master of the house. He was a travelled gentleman, and had been in England to see the Exhibition; he did not, however, seem much impressed with the charms of our climate; and when we suggested that that of Leon was quite as bad, if not worse, he begged us to recollect that we were then in November, and that in Leon they had not such weather in summer. His drawing-room had its sofa and chairs placed in due form; everything was placed immediately at our disposal, to make of it whatever use we thought proper.

Let the traveller make up his mind, to treat all ranks of Spaniards with a certain degree of courtesy, and he will always get on. Here it is no use imagining, because a person is beneath you in his rank of life, that he is to be treated as an inferior. He is a Castilian, and that in his estimation is sufficient reason for him to be considered on an equality with the proudest noble in the land, as he will soon give you to understand, if you do not treat him with becoming deference. This equality is perhaps one of the strangest things in Spain, and the free and easy style, in particular, with which servants treat their masters, strikes one at first as most extraordinary. They are extremely independent in manner; and as they neither give, nor require a month's warning, as with us, they very often announce to you in the morning, that they intend leaving, and take their departure in the evening, much to the inconvenience of the household arrangements. This excessive independence is one reason, doubtless, why it is so difficult to procure good servants; even the natives of the country complain of them much, and therefore it is no wonder that it proves so

particularly disagreeable to people accustomed to English habits.

After the cathedral, the most remarkable thing is the Church of San Isidoro, which has the high privilege of having the Host always visible on the altar. It is a most picturesque jumble of all sorts and styles of architecture, and the time-worn hues of the stone, throw a rich colour over its dilapidated exterior. It was built by Ferdinand, in 1603, to receive the remains of San Isidoro, the great Archbishop of Seville, whose body once rested in the Hermitage of San Isidoro del Campo, near that city. The Saint appears over the principal entrance, fighting the Moors in true Santiago style, for he too used to appear and encourage his faithful followers on the field of battle. Inside, it is a plain Gothic building; at the end, facing the altar, a low open iron door leads you into the Panteon de los Reyes, the sepulchre of many of the early Sovereigns of Castile and Leon. The roof of this small chapel is curiously painted, and still remains in its original state, having escaped the destruction which awaited all the portions of it within reach, during the French invasion.

Nothing can be worse than the restorations, the walls have been painted, and the tombs likewise, which gives the stone sarcophagi the appearance of wooden boxes. For some time the bodies were exposed to view, but the clergy have latterly had them enclosed in their coffins. On leaving this chapel by the cloisters, an inscription, in large gilt letters, strikes the eye, declaring that, "This precious monument of antiquity, the depository of the ashes of so many pious kings, was destroyed by the French, in 1809." There are inscribed the records of an invasion, which rendered this unhappy country for so many years one constant scene of war and bloodshed; an invasion, in which perished monuments of art, treasures of by-gone days, which all the gold of Australia could not

replace. That scenes of horror are ever the inseparable accompaniments of war—that in the storming of towns events may occur, and destruction be effected, which, however much they may afterwards be deplored, are at the moment beyond the restraining power of those in command—all this is indisputable; but the wholesale plunder and destruction, carried on under the authority and sanction of the French generals, never can be justified. Travel over Spain, from one corner to the other, and the same tale will be repeated—everything was carried off by the French.

Nothing was too sacred for their sacrilegious hands to plunder; the triumphs of architecture were wantonly destroyed; churches were converted into stables; and the men who could sanction such deeds, did not hesitate to carry off all that seemed worthy of pillage. The glorious creations of Murillo were torn from the altars, over which they were placed; the walls of the convents were stripped, that the choicest productions of art might grace the halls of some French Marshal, or the galleries of the Imperial palace; and the matchless works, on which the taste and skill of the Arfes had been bestowed, were melted down, to satisfy the cupidity of the conquerors. The canvas of Murillo may still adorn the walls of foreign mansions, and rejoice the eyes of the lover of paintings, but the creations of Arfe can never be replaced. The costly materials in which they were fashioned ensured their destruction.

Spaniards may indeed be excused for the bitterness of feeling, the hatred they entertain, for their neighbours beyond the Pyrenees. In peace or in war, their influence has alike been baneful to the Peninsula; and although it may be uncharitable to remember grievances, which occurred so many years ago, unfortunately they were of a class, the memory of which cannot be easily effaced.

In visiting their plundered churches and ruined buildings, the remembrance of treasures of art and of national glory, irretrievably destroyed, is continually forced upon their recollection; and wherever questions are asked, the one answer is invariably returned—it was the work of the French.

It must, however, be acknowledged, in justice to the French, that, however severe may be the censure which foreigners may pass upon their conduct: the Spaniards, as a nation, have forfeited the right to abuse them, for they have followed in the footsteps of their invaders, and profited by their example. When the regular orders were abolished, no means were taken to preserve even what had been left; many works of art disappeared in the general confusion which followed, and the most splendid triumphs of architecture—exquisite memorials of the piety of the mediæval ages—are now nothing more than mouldering walls left to ruin and decay; and this has been done by the Spaniards themselves. They have completed what the French left unfinished; and the first half of the nineteenth century has been, in truth, a sad epoch for the painting, the sculpture, and the architecture of Spain!

The convent attached to the church of San Isidoro is happily situated close to the city walls, along the top of which the monks had a pleasant walk, and enjoyed a charming view over the country. The church has a fine square tower which rises most picturesquely above the walls, which are in very good preservation, with their massive semi-circular towers. Not far distant is the grand pile of the convent of St. Mark, the façade of which is really splendid. It is a noble building, standing close to the river, and the façade is adorned with medallions and pilasters, wreathed with the most delicate plateresque work. The church has a Gothic portal, but

the interior is entirely a ruin; in fact, the whole building had been put up to sale by auction, and was only saved by the Ayuntamiento purchasing it for the Institute. It is in a miserable condition, and students are decidedly not the class of people most calculated to preserve a building. It belonged to the knights of Santiago: one of those many princely establishments which they erected to afford shelter to pilgrims on the road to Compostella in the troublesome days of petty feuds and intestine warfare. A pretty stone cross stands in the open space in front of the convent.

All is now solitary and deserted: nothing passing in this direction, except a few country people and huge, unwieldy carts, drawn by oxen, dragging their burdens along. The wheels are very primitive; they have no spokes, but are formed solely of a circular piece of wood, with four slits, as it were, cut out of it. Now and then a long string of mules may be seen belonging to the Maragatos, a peculiar race of people who are the "arrieros" of this part of Spain, and monopolise all the traffic to and fro on the roads. They wear a distinct costume of their own, which gives them almost a Flemish appearance, with their slouched hats, wide full trowsers gathered in at the knees, and leather jerkin. They are a strange set of people, and keep very much to themselves, rarely marrying out of their own class; they are always wandering about from place to place, as their trade naturally obliges them, but their head-quarters are at Astorga, and its adjacent district, comprising about thirty-six villages, chiefly inhabited by Maragatos. Some of them are very wealthy; their origin is enveloped in obscurity, and little is known respecting them.

There are several very curious old churches in Leon, with low sloping roofs and little porticos, rather in the style of some small village churches in England: we were

not able to see the interior, as they close them so early. A family to whom we had been introduced, and who was most kind in doing the honours of Leon, took me to visit one or two of the convents; but we could not penetrate within the iron gratings, and were obliged to content ourselves with looking at the pretty faces of the nuns, and talking to them at a respectful distance. The nunneries in general do not contain many architectural beauties. Unlike monasteries, they were rarely built expressly for the purpose for which they were afterwards occupied; more generally they were mansions of the nobility, bequeathed or made over to women for conventual purposes, and as such may be interesting from having undergone but few changes.

One which we visited, the Franciscan Convent of the Conception, was founded by Doña Leonor, daughter of the first Count of Luna in 1518. She gave up her own house for the purpose, and many pious nuns issued from its walls to establish other convents of the same order in Toro Villafranca, &c. We went to see another belonging to the Benedictines, the black dress of the order being most becoming to some very pretty girls who were there. The Lady Abbess here can receive her visitors very comfortably, for instead of having a small reja, which is usually the case, the iron grating extends across the whole room. They always overpower one with "dulces;" and they sent me away with such a quantity, that as I walked through the streets, I felt quite like a little school-girl, who had been petted, because she was a good child. We must not laugh, however, but take it as it is meant, in true warm-hearted kindness.

The Dominican Convent of the Santa Catalina has, since the death of the last nun, been converted into a library for the use of the inhabitants; and on the staircase, and in the principal room, pictures, collected from the old

convents, have been placed. Great has been the havoc committed in Leon among the monasteries. That of San Francisco has been destroyed, and the beautiful Gothic cloister of San Clodio has been entirely demolished; it was sold a short time ago for four thousand reals, and has since been pulled down, and the materials sold. They went partly to assist in making the roads; and a gentleman assured us he had seen some of the statues, which formerly decorated it, broken up on the new high road that has lately been made into Galicia. The Plaza de los Condes is very picturesque: a tall tower marks the palace of the Counts of Luna, and a pretty window still exists over the gateway. The façade has been coloured yellow; and in the ruined patio, porphyry columns, fragments of Berruguete staircases, and arabesque ornaments, peer out from heaps of dust and rubbish. Some of the eaves of the houses are most elaborately carved; and altogether, there are some very pretty scenes in the streets and plazas of this decaying town.

The large square is of course called Plaza de la Constitucion, and dearly do Spaniards treasure that little tablet which generally bears the first article of their constitution graven upon it above the name. Poor people! it serves to remind them they have such a thing, and it is well they have adopted this medium of proclaiming it to the world; had they not done so, it would have been difficult to believe it, and they would run a very good chance of forgetting it themselves. But they treasure it fondly, and an insult offered to that stone sinks deeper into their hearts than all the insults their governments offer to the reality. I have never seen accounts of real crime related with more indignation, than an attempt lately made in a small village by some evil-disposed person to efface this much-cherished name. When the inhabitants awoke one fine morning, they were

shocked at finding the tablet covered with a plaster of mud, hardened as the soul of him who could have planned so vile a deed; and on this were inscribed the words, "Plaza Real;" the majesty of the people had been insulted, and alcaldes, judges, and magistrates of every degree were called in to discover the monster who had committed so atrocious a crime. So long, indeed, as they are satisfied with having the name of the Constitution written up in their squares, they are right to cherish it so tenderly.

The Plaza at Leon has arcades round three sides of it, and on the fourth stands the Consistorio, flanked by two square towers with spires. People were promenading up and down in great numbers, it being the most sheltered place at this season. The inhabitants of Leon seem to have some idea of amusing themselves in their own way; they have established a casino, where there is a billiard-table, and where ladies go to take coffee, enveloped in clouds of smoke. The members have fitted it up very neatly, and give occasional balls. We went to the theatre one night to have a glimpse of the beau-monde of Leon; the actors did not seem very first-rate, but they gave one or two farces, amusing from their very absurdity. Some of the humbler class wore a red mantilla, bordered with black, which had a very gay appearance. Going out in the evening through the narrow and ill-paved street is not a very lively amusement, more particularly as walking is the fashion, carriages not having yet been introduced.

There are still several houses of the nobility existing; the most interesting and perhaps the most imposing is that of the Guzmans, where Guzman el Bueno was born, the same who is buried near Seville. Almost in ruins, it is now appropriated to some of the offices of the local government authorities. The view of the tower of San Isidoro, and part of the city walls, form a pretty

picture from the Plaza in front of this house, and opposite to it is the hospital, with old wooden galleries round the patio. The weather prevented our exploring the out-of-the-way corners of this town, and obliged us to change our route, and return to Valladolid by the road we came, and thence direct to Madrid. This we regretted much, for we had wished to see a little more of these ancient Castilian cities, and had intended returning by Zamora and Salamanca, visiting the battle-field where the Duke of Wellington reaped such laurels, and taking a glance at Avila, where there is much to interest, although it is but little known.

From Leon to Benavente and Zamora there are no means of conveyance except riding, and that could not be thought of at this season of the year. There are diligences now from Madrid to Leon, which continue on to Oviedo and Coruña. The mountain passes between Leon and Oviedo were already covered with snow, and we had to wait for the arrival of these diligences before we knew whether we could have places. Instead of arriving at the usual hour, they did not come in till two in the morning, and we had to sit up all night to await their arrival. At length we were told there were places, and we had a wretched walk in the dark and in the rain down to the Posada. At length we started, and were obliged to fraternize with our servant, a Galician, as there was no place vacant, but in the interior with us. Our other companion was one of the officials of the diligence company. If the interminable plains had appeared dreary on coming, their appearance was tenfold more miserable on our return; the whole face of nature wore a look of dreariness, the country was under water, and the mules could hardly drag the heavy vehicle through the soft mud. We were told afterwards that our companion was the owner of the mules, and consequently

the coachman did not venture to drive fast so long as he was with us.

We stopped at a miserable village to have some dinner, where they were not prepared to receive us, and the cooking presented rather an amusing study. The only fuel was chopped straw, and it was perfectly mysterious, with such primitive accessories, how anything could be prepared. The soup, however, was soon ready, consisting of bread, water, oil and a few eggs floating at the top, and a chicken, whose age must have been something patriarchal. Certainly those who are not prepared to digest anything, and make the best of whatever is set before them, will find travelling in Spain no very lively amusement; but those who are not very particular will incur no risk of starvation, and find things probably better than they have been led to expect. Bread is always good, and an excellent cup of chocolate may generally be procured; it is made very thick, and served in tiny little cups, with long thin biscuits, with which you are expected to scoop it up, spoons not being orthodox.

At the diligence-dinners some of the dishes may always be managed, and the sooner the traveller puts himself on an intimate footing with the olla the better; for he will find it welcome him on every table, from one end of Spain to the other. It introduces itself to his notice at the commencement of every dinner, with its small piece of beef done to rags; its attendant morsel of fat bacon and red sausage, which the traveller had better look upon with distrust, unless he has resolved before he enters Spain to count garlic among one of his favourite condiments; and surrounded by its coronet of vegetables and garbanzos, that tough pea, which forms the delight of every Spaniard. A good olla well cooked is not a dish to be disdained, but in general it is so stringy that it is

hardly eatable. Here all meat is done till it falls asunder; it is not very tender in itself, and they seek to remedy this defect by stewing the little good there is out of it. The remonstrance of an Englishman, who complained bitterly of the badness of the meat, was answered with an indignant exclamation by the waiter, "that it was very extraordinary, for it had been on the fire upwards of five hours!" Except at the best hotels puddings and such things are unknown in Spanish cooking, dessert always following the last dish of meat, accompanied by some preserve, which is formed more of sugar than any other ingredient. Food fit for the gods, if there were anything in a name, for one of the most favourite dishes of this description is called "angel's hair."

The sight of a Spanish kitchen does not convey any great promise, and it is wonderful what can be produced by the few means at their disposal. A brick stove, with three or four holes for placing charcoal, on which small earthenware pots are always simmering, are the sole conveniences they can command. This, together with the natural toughness of the meat, which is more essentially felt when chickens are in the case, adds to the difficulty of making any dishes which would be palatable to those accustomed to a French cuisine. In travelling, of course the fowls are always killed on the arrival of the guest; keeping them for a day or so is an idea which never enters their imaginations. A friend of ours, who was endeavouring to introduce English customs into his establishment, desired his servant to keep a fowl for two days before he cooked it. The fowl came to table, but as tough as usual; when the case was inquired into, it was discovered that the fowl had been kept alive in the kitchen for two days, the man little dreaming his master meant it to be kept after it was killed. Stewed

partridges are an everlasting dish; no game laws confining their destruction to within certain periods, they seem to form the staple food, but are dry and tasteless, partly from being so much overdone, and their flavour is far inferior to our own. Hares, too, come to table very often, although suspicions are darkly hinted that cats sometimes appear under such a favourable disguise. Spaniards seldom drink tea or coffee, and it is difficult to procure either good.

Our wretched attempt at dinner afforded sufficient topic for discussion on the road to Valladolid, to a fresh passenger we had in the interior, who was very indignant at having been made to pay six reals for so unsatisfactory a repast. Our new companion was most noisy and disagreeable, and as he occasionally joined in chorus with a very wild party who were in the rotonda, we were not sorry when we reached Valladolid. Our journey had occupied a much longer time than it ought to have done, on account of the state of the roads, and fresh delays awaited us here; for the same reason—the diligence from Madrid was behind its time, and we had to wait till it arrived. The inn was full, so we had no resource but to join our companions at supper, and pass the night as we could, listening to their conversation.

The other diligence arrived at about six in the morning, and delighted we were at the prospect of being able to continue our route. It came full of unhappy people, who had long journeys before them to Oviedo and Coruña, and among them a large Spanish family, consisting of a fat lady and her children, all looking very uncomfortable, as Spanish women always do when they are travelling; they seem so resigned to their fate, and with their kerchiefs tied round their heads, await with patient resignation all that may befall them. We started, and had a good four-and-twenty hours' journey before us to

Madrid, even in the regular course of things, but now unfortunately it occupies above six-and-thirty. The only place of interest we passed was Olmedo, celebrated for several battles fought there in the fifteenth century. Here you begin to see the Guadarramas showing their bold outline, forming a barrier between those plains and the town of Madrid.

Towards night we reached the Fonda San Rafael, a large inn where we had supper; and when day dawned, we were already crossing the range of the Guadarrama, the highest point which the road traverses, and which rises about five thousand feet above the level of the sea. The pass is finely laid out, and a marble lion stands at the summit, where you look down on the dreary, undulating plains of Castile. You descend by a gentle slope now to the village of Guadarrama, about seven leagues distant from Madrid; here we stopped to breakfast at a wretched posada, dignified by the high-sounding title of the "Parador antigua de las dos Castillas." Here it seemed to be the right thing to take a glass of milk, and the blazing wood fire offered many temptations on that cold morning. The wind was bitter, with that piercing air which sweeps over the plains around Madrid, and gives that capital the disagreeable climate for which it is noted.

Just after passing Guadarrama to the right, a huge mass of building attracts the eye, rearing its colossal form against the slope of the mountain, the gleams of the sun resting on its grey-slated roofs and cupolas. This building is the Escorial, one of the most wondrous edifices ever raised by the hand of man. We must turn aside from the road, to visit this giant structure of the gloomy and ascetic Philip. Grand, indeed, is this vast convent palace, and few can gaze on it without feelings of emotion. The stern and sombre Escorial is a fit emblem of grave Castile, as the light and elegant

Alhambra is of sparkling Andalucia! Both equally objects which rivet the attention of the traveller; both unique, and yet so different. The convent palace of the Christian, the palace fortress of the Moslem! Both on the declivities of mountains, whose peaks are alike enveloped in wintry snows; but the one looks over a scene of barren nakedness, while the other commands a plain teeming with vegetation. In the Escorial, the church and convent eclipse the splendour of the palace—in the Alhambra, the palace and the fortress mingle imperceptibly together. The Escorial, whose soaring dome and lonely cloisters impress the mind with feelings of solitude and meditation—the Alhambra, whose fairy courts and sparkling fountains, speak only of ease and luxury. The one, befitting temple of a faith, which preached repentance and mortification—the other, meet emblem of a people, whose creed breathes only of worldly enjoyment. Representatives of the days of monkish rule, and chivalrous adventure—types of ages, that have passed away, of classes, who have each done their allotted work in the great drama of the world—the cowled monk and the plumed knight, were each required in his day; but new ideas and new feelings are now called into action. and neither is in keeping with the requirements of the nineteenth century!

The Escorial was a grand idea to be conceived and executed by one man; it was a mighty sepulchre for the Sovereigns of a country, whose dominion was acknowledged throughout the world; and a sepulchre it became, not only of the Kings, but of their country, and Spain lies buried, as it were, within the Escorial. Philip, who prepared that mighty mausoleum, paved the way for the fall of Spain; and the proud inheritance he had received from the recluse of San Yuste, descended with diminished splendour to his son. The first thought of this edifice

arose in Philip's mind on the field of San Quentin, when the French arms were vanquished, and victory proclaimed itself for Spain. Then the monarch resolved to dedicate a temple to San Lorenzo, where by night as well as by day, hymns of praise and thankfulness should be offered before the throne of the Most High. Some say, the choice of San Lorenzo was dictated from the circumstance of the battle having been fought upon his festival; but the Padre Villacastin says, that the King was influenced by having had to raze a monastery to the ground, that was dedicated to San Lorenzo, in order the better to assault San Quentin. One of his first thoughts on returning to Spain, was to commence the undertaking, and a commission was formed to choose the site.

The situation thus selected, harmonized well with the gloomy fanaticism of the Sovereign, who sought a retreat from the world, yet not too distant from the capital of his dominions. The new monastery was offered to the followers of San Jerome, whose austere rules seemed most adapted to the ideas of the royal founder. At a chapter of the order, held in 1561, the offer was accepted; and a prior being elected, he and several friars went to reside in the village of the Escorial, a wretched and poverty-stricken place, in order that they might superintend the erection of their future habitation. The designs and erection were entrusted to Juan Bantista de Toledo, a Spanish architect, who had studied in Rome, and left evidence of his talent in the city of Naples, where among other things, the noble street which still preserves his name, bears witness to the genius now about to be exercised upon a wider field. His pupil Juan de Herrera, was shortly afterwards associated with him in the work, and lived to complete it. During the whole period of its erection, the Escorial appears never to have been absent from the mind of the monarch, amid all the important

affairs, which occupied his attention; and even when the kingdom of Portugal was added to his sway, he was busy for its adornment, while visiting his new capital on the banks of the Tagus. Had the thought of fixing his residence there occurred to him then, he might have laid the foundations for the future prosperity of his country, and benefitted her considerably more, than by squandering millions on a monastery.

The first stone was laid by Philip himself in 1563, and the last was placed upon the edifice in 1584. But much yet remained to be done, before this magnificent building could be considered as completed. Treasures of art were now to ornament its walls, and painters and sculptors, and workers in gold and silver, had to adorn this monument of a Sovereign's piety. A commission had been appointed to collect relics of all sorts and sizes, to enrich the sanctuary. The holy fathers visited every corner, where such things were likely to be collected, the relics were taken out of the old cases, in which they had been originally placed, and carefully cleaned; the bones of saints and martyrs were gilt, a piece of officiousness, which did not quite please the Sovereign, for, as the Padre Siguenza, one of the historians of the monastery says, "all the poverty, in which they were clothed, was only a faithful evidence of the purity, reverence and truth of those pious ages, in which there was so much faith, and so little money."

At length, after so many years of unremitting labour, the mighty edifice was completed; all that the wealth of a powerful monarch could collect, was united beneath this enormous roof, this true Museum of Art; and the King determined on having the last seal put to his work, by the Papal Nuncio.

Philip himself, although bending under the weight of increasing infirmities, was present. The hour of his death

was fast approaching, and he expired on the 13th of September, 1598, in the seventy-first year of his age, after having reigned forty-two years. He left nothing for his son to complete, except the Pantheon, where the ashes of the Spanish Sovereigns were to be deposited. His successor, Philip III., commenced this undertaking, and the most costly marbles were employed in its erection; but it was not until the reign of Philip IV., that it was ready for the reception of the royal coffins. Before they were transported to their final resting-place, they were opened, in order that the remains might be transferred to the sarcophagi prepared for them. It was found that the body of Charles V. was but slightly changed, after having been deposited there ninety-six years; it was not embalmed, but wrapped in a linen cloth, as he had desired in his will; and was covered with rosemary, and other aromatic herbs, which had carpeted the hills around San Yuste. Seven members of the House of Austria, were then taken to the gorgeous Pantheon, amid all the pomp and ceremony of so strange a funeral pageant; and there they rest in peace, beside those of the House of Bourbon, their successors on the throne of Spain.

In 1671, a dreadful fire nearly destroyed all that had been erected with so much labour and expense. Nothing could stay the fury of the flames; neither the exertions of the assembled multitudes, nor the prayers of the friars, who appeared bearing some of the miraculous relics which were enshrined within the temple, and which, it is said, had already proved most efficacious in similar circumstances, were of any avail; and many of the Arabic manuscripts, which enriched the library, as well as the standard taken at Lepanto, were consumed. The Escorial became a pile of blackened ruins, and the church alone remained unscathed. They succeeded, however,

in saving most of the treasures contained within the building, and by the most unwearied exertions on the part of the Prior, the damage was repaired in the course of a few years; but the prestige of the Escorial was already on the wane, and on the accession of the House of Bourbon, in the year 1700, it ceased to be the favourite retreat of the Spanish monarchs. Philip V., although possessed of that love of solitude, which had thrown a sort of gloom over the lives of some of his predecessors, preferred the pine-clad heights of San Ildefonso to the monastic seclusion of the Escorial.

The present century has sealed its ruin. Ravaged and despoiled by the French, the walls were deprived of the pictures which adorned them; the records of the learning of past ages disappeared from the shelves of the library; the golden caskets, which contained the wondrous relics, collected by its founder, were carried off; and all the costly plate and jewelled ornaments, which glittered upon the high altar, were melted down or stolen; and the matchless crucifix of Benvenuto Cellini, which was considered of such value, that Philip, to avoid its being injured in the carriage, caused it to be transported on men's shoulders from Barcelona, was thrown aside in a corner of the building, where it lay long neglected. The blow, inflicted by this wholesale pillage, has never been recovered; during the civil wars which followed, many of the pictures were removed to Madrid; and now grace the walls of the museum, ticketed with a label, "from the Escorial."

When the storm, which had long been brooding, burst upon the convents, this princely edifice was also involved in the general destruction. Its fall was delayed a little, but on St. Andrew's Day, 1837, two hundred and seventy-six years after the brotherhood had been constituted by Philip II., they were summoned to listen to the decree

announcing their final extinction. No time was allowed the inmates to make any preparation for the change which awaited them. They were told that was the last day on which they were to dine together, and that on the morrow they must seek shelter under some other roof. They were not allowed to take even their beds and scanty furniture; these were considered the property of the establishment, and as such were sold afterwards by public auction.

The building was fast crumbling to ruin until it was placed in some repair by the Queen's tutor, Arguelles, who put aside a yearly sum out of the royal patrimony for its maintenance and preservation. This arrested its destruction for a time. There are now some twenty or thirty priests who reside there to guard the ashes of the Sovereigns, and perform the requisite services in the church: but the future destiny of the Escorial is now a matter of speculation. The cowled followers of St. Jerome may once more people its deserted corridors, or its massive walls may crumble into dust amid silence and neglect.

But we must turn from such speculations to penetrate within the gloomy pile, over whose history we have thus been glancing. The greatest wonder it now possesses is the old blind guide, Cornelio, who has escorted travellers over the same unvaried round for any number of years they may choose to imagine. He walks on ahead of his party with a firm and determined step, never hesitating or faltering for a moment, quite as though he could see. He has established a regular routine of sight-seeing, from which it would be little less than high treason to diverge. The diligence leaves Madrid early, and arrives about one o'clock. You have hardly had time to see about rooms, before Cornelio arrives to take you down to the Casa del Campo, and then

to the church, escorting you on the following morning over the remainder of the building. We followed our blind guide with implicit confidence, obeying the mandate with due submission which bade us leave the Escorial itself until the last.

We visited first a small summer-hosue, called the Casino del Principe, an expensive plaything, erected by Charles IV. when Prince of the Asturias; it is as pretty as silks and satins, and gilt furniture, and China ornaments, and second-rate pictures can make it, and contains a regular suite of apartments. It is surrounded by a pretty garden in the valley just below the convent. As we retraced our steps up the hill, we had the vast pile before us; and when the first poetry is over, and the eye begins to criticise, this huge conventional palace offers nothing in the exterior to captivate the imagination. Colossal in its dimensions, one cannot fail to admire the untiring energy and determination which succeeded in rearing so enormous a pile, but its long lines of insignificant windows appear like the exterior of a busy manufactory, or the plain elevation of a gigantic poor-house.

Wishing to avoid the over-ornamentation of the day, its architects fell into the opposite extreme, and the nakedness of the elevation considerably impairs its beauty. The building is erected in the form of a gridiron, the portion appropriated to the palace forming the handle. A broad terrace runs round two sides, and the grand entrance is towards the north, facing the mountain, and looking away from the capital. A small door leads into a grand quadrangle, called the Patio de los Reyes, from the colossal statues which adorn the façade of the church. The grand entrance is only opened for the admission of royalty, and you pass through a small side-door into the church.

When you cross the threshold, and stand beneath the archway which supports the choir, the massive grandeur of this gigantic temple strikes you with an indefinable feeling of awe. Plain and unornamented, the huge granite blocks, with which it is formed, seem as though they had been raised by some giant hand, and like the colossal pyramids of Egypt, promise to last as many centuries, a witness of the cold heart and iron will of the monarch at whose behest they were reared. Grand, indeed, is this temple, and simple as it is grand; nothing light or trivial mars the fine proportions—so perfect, that at first its size is scarcely evident—no massive choir intercepts the view, no gilded reja cuts up the nave; there in front is the high altar, raised on its throne of steps, surrounded by all the splendour that marble, and gold, and jasper can bestow: around, are the plain granite walls; below, the pavement, with its white and black chequered squares; above, the dome and vaulted roof, though its effect would have been grander without the azure colouring of Giordano's frescoes.

The church is in the form of a Greek cross, and its walls are adorned with many paintings of Navarrete, more commonly called El Mudo, whose works are not much known out of the Peninsula. He was born at Logroño in 1526; in early childhood he lost the power of speech, but grew eloquent with his pencil. He studied in Venice, and adopted much of the gorgeous colouring belonging to that school; his pictures in the Escorial are chiefly full-length figures of the Saints and Apostles.

The high altar is ascended by a flight of some seventeen or eighteen steps of costly marble; the retablo is magnificent, with rather a fiery picture of San Lorenzo on his gridiron in the centre. Close beside, on the pavement of the chapel, are the private oratories of the royal family; and here, on the epistle side, is the small alcove where the

royal founder used to sit and attend the services, so arranged that he might see the clergy officiating at the altar, and listen to the solemn peals of the swelling organ; and here he breathed his last: with a crucifix in one hand, and the veil of our Lady of Montserrat in the other, he closed his strange life of fanaticism and tyranny. The motives which actuated that cold gloomy mind, none could penetrate, but he worked much evil for his country, and silently paved the way for the destruction of the liberties of his people.

Over the oratories are placed bronze statues, richly gilt, of some of the Imperial family. On the gospel side of the high altar, opposite to where his son expired, is the figure of Charles V.; at his right the Empress Isabel, his daughter Mary, and his two sisters, the Queens of France and Hungary. By the side is the proud inscription, engraved in letters of bronze:

"If any one of the descendants of Charles V. shall exceed his ancestor in the glory of his achievements, let him occupy this place—let the rest abstain."

Opposite is a group in the same style, composed of Philip II., three of his wives, and his son, Don Carlos—the unhappy Prince who by some unaccountable caprice has ever been the favourite hero of dramatists and poets. Alas! that the glowing pages of Schiller should be nothing but a fable, and history compelled to own that Don Carlos was only a mad and wayward youth, whose person it was well to guard, both for his father's safety and his own.

In the aisles are the reliquaries, which contained much curious working in gold and silver before the French invasion; then their contents were scattered, and it was found rather difficult to identify them again after they had been so irreverently displaced. The lover of relics will, however, still find ample field for curiosity, for,

according to the statements made, there are upwards of seven thousand still enshrined in this temple; and among the list are mentioned seven bodies, one hundred and forty-four heads, and three hundred and six arms and legs, all in a high state of preservation. The walls of the sacristy are covered with marble, a few splendid vestments are still preserved, which escaped the general destruction, and more exquisite specimens of needlework it would be difficult to find. The borders are all copies of paintings, representing various events in the life of our Saviour.

A door leads by a splendid staircase down to the Pantheon, where are deposited, in a subterranean temple of jasper and of agate, the remains of the Spanish monarchs. There lie in black marble sarcophagi the remains of those who have ruled over this empire, from the days that Charles V. left the crown of two worlds to the care of his successor, to the time when Ferdinand VII. bequeathed a disputed crown and a ruined kingdom to his young and helpless daughter. We were not allowed to enter this royal tomb-house, for the little Prince of the Asturias, reposes in the centre, and until his coffin be removed strangers are are not allowed to enter.

Leaving the mausoleum, which is placed immediately under the high altar of the church, the blind guide leads the traveller over the remainder of this enormous building, through the vast cloisters, and up the magnificent staircase, adorned with bright-coloured frescoes from the hand of Lucas Giordano. In these corridors hung many of the peerless paintings which have since been transferred to Madrid. From the cloisters you enter the choir, which, as before mentioned, is placed over the entrance to the church; it is in keeping with the majesty of the whole; the stalls are plain and simple, and in the right-hand corner, is the seat once occupied

by Philip II. It was here that one day during vespers he received the news of the battle of Lepanto, where his brother, Don John of Austria, laid low the power of the Crescent. Apparently unmoved by the glad intelligence, his countenance betrayed no symptoms of emotion, nor did he take any notice of the arrival of the messenger until after the conclusion of the service, when he ordered the Prior to sing a solemn Te Deum in token of thanks. The standard which had been taken from the Turks was deposited in the library, as well as a copy of the Koran, which formed a part of the spoils.

In 1588 the prayers of the inmates of the Escorial were offered up to implore victory for the Spanish Armada, which had been sent forth to crush the power of England. Night and day services were performed in the church, and as a Spanish author relates, they abounded so much that their enemies might well declare, "their prayers had been so numerous and so efficacious that the invincible Armada had gone straight to heaven."

There are some magnificently illuminated choral books preserved here; and in a small chapel behind the Prior's chair stands the beautiful crucifix which I have before noticed, and which was presented to Philip by Cosmo de Medici. The space is too small to do justice to this glorious work of art; the figure is very fine, the head falls on one side in all the agony of death, and the whole breathes a spirit well in keeping with the subject Many are the rooms through which you pass where once the fairest creations of the painter glowed in living canvas on the walls. In a lonely chapel hangs the Last Supper of Titian, that painting which the monarch got cut to fit its allotted place, so impatient was he to see it hung up. El Mudo, indignant

at such an insult offered to one of Titian's paintings, promised to do a reduced copy within six months, but to no purpose; the despotic Sovereign would brook no delay, and Titian's work was sacrificed. Strange in Philip, who not only patronised art, but thoroughly understood and appreciated it, and was one of its greatest patrons.

The library is rich in treasures; some choice specimens are shown to visitors, and great numbers of valuable Arabic manuscripts are collected on its shelves. After all the sombre grandeur of the convent, the smaller portion allotted to the palace is uninteresting. Here a party of sight-seeing Spaniards joined us, and lingered in a state of ecstasy, pausing before every staring piece of modern tapestry, and going off into perfect rapture at the sight of every ormolu clock, and all the furniture of a modern palace. This was to them the most enchanting portion of the whole. Those who love such things have every reason to be delighted with two or three of the rooms, on which immense sums have been expended; I never saw such exquisite specimens of marqueterie. The walls, floors, and every corner are all inlaid with wood of different colours, arranged in most tasteful forms and patterns.

In a hall, called La Sala de las Batallas, are some curious frescoes representing the great battle, in which John II. and Alvaro de Luna defeated the Moors, and likewise of the battle of San Quentin. We ascended to the roof through galleries, which appeared hewn out of the solid granite walls, whence we could distinguish the outline of the entire building.

Travellers may establish themselves very comfortably in the village of the Escorial, and warm themselves after feeling the cold blasts of the Sierra by sitting round the

large fire, with its crackling logs, which gives a most cheerful appearance to the sitting-room of the "posada." Mine host, too, is an amusing little man, very civil and obliging, and ready to contribute to the amusement of his guests by getting up music or dancing for them in the evening after sight-seeing is concluded. We had a capital concert of twelve guitars which all went wonderfully together, enlivened now and then by the singing of some light "seguidilla." The servants at the inn, the mayoral of the diligence, and several others, joined the circle, and they ended by dancing very merrily; some of our own party, overcome by their early rising, and long day's work, stealthily left the room to retire for the night, while a young Frenchman, who had joined our circle, sat moodily in the chimney-corner, trying to digest a certain red book which his countrymen, when they travel in Spain, generally carry with them, although they do not find in its pages a too flattering picture of themselves.

LAVANDERAS.

CHAPTER XVI.

Scarcely any rank or profession escaped the infection of the prevailing immorality; but those persons who made politics their business were perhaps the most corrupt part of the corrupt society. For they were exposed not only to the noxious influences which affected the nation generally, but also to a taint of a peculiar and of a most malignant kind.—MACAULAY'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

LA GRANJA—SEGOVIA—THE AQUEDUCT—SAN JUSTO—CONVENT OF PARRAL—CHURCH OF THE TEMPLARS—CATHEDRAL—ALCAZAR—WINTRY WEATHER—RETURN TO MADRID—POLITICAL CRISIS—ASSEMBLING AND DISSOLUTION OF THE CORTES—THEIR CONSTITUTION—CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES—MINISTERIAL MEASURES—THE DECREE—CENSORSHIP OF THE PRESS—FALL OF THE MINISTRY—REFLECTIONS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF SPAIN.

A FINE mountain road leads from the Escorial, passing Guadarrama, over the Puerto Navacerrada, amid splendid mountain scenery, to the summer retreat, which the Bourbon King preferred to the gloomy pile of his Austrian predecessors. All has a French air at La Granja, or San

Ildefonso, as it is sometimes called; the fountains in the grounds are said to rival those of Versailles in beauty. It was too late in the season to do justice to this elevated summer residence, and we passed its gates to continue our journey to Segovia. The snow was already thick upon the slopes of the Guadarrama, and the dark pines rising out of the white mass, looked truly alpine; but mild and beautiful as the mountains appeared, there was no enjoyment in the parterres buried beneath such a shroud, and we hastened on to the most picturesque of Castilian cities. The shades of evening were just closing in, when we reached Segovia, and in the gloomy darkness we conjured up visions of a Roman amphitheatre, and much we wondered, that no handbook had ever alluded to the splendid ruins, which we passed on entering the town.

Alas, for the morning! on making diligent inquiries, we discovered that our magnificent amphitheatre was nothing more than an unfinished bull ring! So much for the disenchantment to which travellers are subject. Segovia is a charmingly situated town; the walls and houses cresting the heights with the splendid aqueduct spanning the ravine. To the student and admirer of early church architecture, it offers many objects of interest from the number of buildings of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which abound, all presenting some peculiar feature. The aqueduct must, however, remain the most remarkable object in Segovia, both from its antiquity and its stupendous size, which makes all the pigmy creations of modern days sink into insignificance. Here the Segovians are spared the trouble of descending their steep streets to the river's banks, and the trade of "aguador" is not so flourishing as in Toledo, and other places. The pure water from the source of Rio Frio is brought to their very doors.

The low arches of the aqueduct, gradually rising as the

ground descends, form two tiers, throwing their gigantic chain across the ravine, and carrying the water into the very heart of the town. Massive granite blocks piled one above the other, without cement or any artificial means to bind them together, remain as monuments of that colossal empire, whose works are the amazement of posterity. It is not strange that the lower orders, ignorant of the existence of such an empire as that of Rome, should look with wonder upon works, which bear so different a stamp to any they see executed in their own days, and that the usual popular legend should exist, that it was the work of an unholy hand—in short, it is ascribed to his Satanic majesty, and to him is attributed all the honour and glory of this huge structure. Cunning of hand he must have been, if he were the architect; and yet tradition tells us, that he was foiled in attaining the reward of all this labour by the superior cunning of a worthy priest.

It seems that the reverend father, according to established usage, had a housekeeper; but she was young and pretty, which, strictly speaking, was quite contrary to rule, for the age of forty is that which is considered the proper standard for those respectable people. However, although the canon law must be kept, there may be many ways of keeping it; and rumour will have it, that many of the padres obeyed the Church by getting their housekeeping done by two, whose united ages amounted to forty, which was just the same thing; and so we must suppose that the good curate of Segovia acted on this principle.

One fine day, this fair damsel, tired of descending to the river, was musing how she could supply her master with his "olla" without so much toil; and vowing there was nothing she would not give to be saved the trouble, when suddenly she was accosted by a knight in shining

armour, who expressed his readiness to realize her wishes to her perfect contentment, provided she would grant him one gift in return. This dashing knight, as may be readily guessed, was the arch-fiend himself, and the reward he sought was the maiden's soul. Frightened and perplexed at so strange an interview, as well she might, the poor girl at length accepted the offer, and hastened home in a state of mind, that sorely puzzled her master to account for. After many questionings, she at last confided to him her sorrows; but who can picture the dismay and horror of the priest, when he learned the sort of company she had been in and the fatal pledge she had made.

The son of the Church, however, was not to be outdone, nor allow his handmaiden to be thus carried off, as it were, before his very eyes, and that too by a rival with whom it was his special duty to struggle. When, therefore, the Evil One returned, to have the contract finally sealed, he was met by the old priest himself, armed with a goodly supply of holy water to keep the enemy in check, and maintain a wholesome distance between them. It is needless to detail the long and subtle discussion which took place upon the binding nature of compacts in general; suffice it to say, that while the priest admitted that a bargain is a bargain, even though one of the parties be a very objectionable person to deal with, still, he insisted, that the consideration should be carried out to the fullest extent; and that not only his own house should be supplied with water, but the whole town of Segovia, for all ages to come; and, moreover, that the work should be executed before daybreak on the following morning.

All this was readily acceded to; and as the sun was to rise at half-past four, the devil made his calculations by the curate's clock, little dreaming, clever as he was, that his wily opponent had previously put it back. He dis-

appeared, and on the following morning the inhabitants of Segovia beheld with astonishment a noble aqueduct conveying the purest water to their very doors, and its stupendous arches towering high above the roofs of their tiny houses. One stone, however, was wanting, and is wanting there still. The priest had triumphed, and saved his servant's soul; for much to the devil's surprise, the sun had risen, while yet the work was unfinished—misled by the curate's time-piece, he was caught by the morning beams, with the last stone in his hand, when he instantly vanished; thereby affording another instance, that in Spain nothing is ever destined to be completed.

The gigantic work, which, according to the idle legend, had been gained for the good people of Segovia by the sagacity of one priest, appears to have been, in truth, secured to them by the talent and energy of another. The original founder is not really known; it is, however, certain, that the aqueduct was much injured by the invading Moors, when they took Segovia, and a great portion of it remained in ruins, until the time of Isabella, when one of the monks of the Parral offered to restore it; and so well did he do his work, that the five-and-thirty arches which he rebuilt, can barely be distinguished from the original structure. Thus has this stupendous work been preserved to the present day: and here in this retired corner it still continues, after the lapse of so many centuries, to perform the office for which it was destined, while the mighty aqueducts, which covered the Campagna of Rome, are fast decaying; and the ruins of the Pont du Gard attract the traveller, as he passes on to the amphitheatre of Nismes. Over the centre arches, on one side, is a niche with the statue of the Virgin, and on the other the remains of a figure, but such a grim skeleton-looking thing, that the inhabitants are fairly convinced, it was meant for their favourite architect.

The houses appear small and insignificant, as they are clustered near its arches, and little their inmates appreciate that mighty monument of antiquity. One or two of the people were particularly indignant at the talbotype apparatus blocking up the streets: "How could any one wish to draw those old stones?" exclaimed one; while another, wiser than the rest, imparted to the assembled crowd that we were only taking a copy of it, in order to build something like it in our own country. One of the best views of the aqueduct is from the church of San Justo; its tower and ornamented apse forming a beautiful foreground to the picture. A pretty détour may be made through the valley to the San Lorenzo, a small suburb, where the river flows along over a stony bed, escaping from noisy mills, which are perched here and there amid the blocks of granite that border it. From this point the town is seen crowning the height; to the left the aqueduct joins it to the opposite hills; to the right rise the turrets of the Alcazar, its walls descending perpendicularly into the ravine beneath.

The waters of the Eresma flow joyfully along, while groups of women washing, crowd its poplar-fringed banks; one or two bridges cross it, and to the right rises the ruined convent of the Parral, formerly belonging to the order of San Jerome, which flourished so extensively in Spain. Their gardens were so celebrated, that a popular saying described them as the earthly paradise.

Enclosed in their rocky valley, they receive all the rays of the sun, and vegetation luxuriates in the shelter thus afforded. A hermitage formerly stood here, where the celebrated Juan Pacheco, Marquis de Villena, founded a convent in the year 1447. The civil wars, which ensued in the reign of Henry IV., prevented the completion of his design; it was, however, richly endowed, and became in course of years one of the most favoured possessions of

the order. But it has, of course, shared the fate of its companions. It is supposed to be most carefully guarded; some difficulty exists in seeing it, and it is necessary to apply to the governor for the keys.

This might lead one to imagine its remains were highly prized; but the man who came down to show it did not seem very particular as to his charge. In a few years it will be a heap of ruins; the grand portal of the church has already disappeared, and the interior rivals the Cartuja of Jerez in the scene of destruction it presents. The pavement is torn up, and the splendid tombs of the Villenas, its illustrious founders, have been sadly mutilated. A party of soldiers came in while we were there, and amused themselves scrambling over the monuments, and taking away some little record of their visit in the shape of a piece of sculptured marble; our guide did not seem to wish to interfere with their proceedings, and we of course had nothing to say.

On a hill, above the Parral, is a most interesting ruined church, dedicated to La Vera Cruz, built by the Templars in 1204. The keys are intrusted to the same watchful hands as those of the Parral. This temple was formerly used as the parish church of Zamaramala, a village at a little distance; but now it has fallen into disuse. It is of an octagonal form, with two very pretty entrances like our Norman gateways with zigzag mouldings, and has a square tower, the interior of which is very curious. The crosses of the knight are set round in the wall, and in the centre is an inner chapel, very low, and consisting of two stories; to the upper one of which you ascend by a flight of steps, and a tomb is there preserved, said to be an imitation of the Holy Sepulchre, but the resemblance did not strike us very forcibly. This chapel ought to be preserved as an interesting monument, from its singularity.

Below the Vera Cruz, in the valley, is the convent of the Virgin de la Fuencisla, where an image of the Virgin, dressed in all the splendour that can be lavished on such objects, is held in most especial veneration by the inhabitants of Segovia. The building itself leans against the overhanging cliff; some of the steps are cut in the solid rock which also serves as a roof to the staircase. The convent is in good preservation, but it does not contain anything remarkable, being indebted for its preservation not to its artistic merit, but to its favourite shrine. From the platform in front, the view of the Alcazar is very fine, as it stands out crowning the point of the cliff, although its general effect is much injured by its grey-slated roofs. It terminates a bold promontory, at whose base a small stream falls into the Eresma, which continues its unquiet course, foaming and rushing along between precipitous banks.

Crossing one of the bridges, you climb the heights on which the Alcazar stands, rather a steep ascent. In front is the lofty tower of the San Esteban, with its rows of arches and quaint architecture. All these Segovian churches are in the same style; their great peculiarity consists in having a corridor along one, or perhaps two sides, the arches supported by double columns, and highly decorated capitals. Along the cornice runs a rich border of tiny arches, with varied corbels, and quaint heads filling up the interstices. Some churches are more ornamented than others, but all bear the same stamp. One of the most picturesque is the San Juan, now converted into a house of refuge for the distressed pictures which are not considered worthy of a place in the museum, where have been assembled the contents of the deceased convents. The portal of this church is more enriched than the generality, perhaps it is of rather a later period; and although the corridor has been

blocked up, it makes a charming picture with its low square tower.

In the Plaza San Martin are façades of old mansions, now turned into shops, while the windows above bear witness to former splendour; and a tall square tower, belonging to the house of the Marquis de Lozoya, attracts attention. Some modern houses, painted in all the grandeur that the brightest ultramarine can confer, disfigure an adjoining street, but these are considered triumphs of taste of the present inhabitants, and an evidence of what rapid strides to improvement their city is making. There is scarcely a street that does not present some object which delights the eye from its originality; and to any one fond of drawing, Segovia affords a wide field for the pencil. Those who are tired of the Norman architecture of the churches may pay the nuns of the Corpus a visit, and look at their chapel, unmistakeably of Moorish origin, or in imitation of Moorish work. Horse-shoe arches, supported by extraordinary capitals, and short thick columns, divide the aisles, while above in the nave runs a long row of Moorish arches and stucco arabesques; all spoiled, of course, by whitewash, thickly laid on. The girl, who did the honours, was very anxious that we should read the history of a miracle which had been performed there in 1410; but we were hurried, and to her surprise preferred looking at the Moorish work. There is only one thing resembling this church, and that is the old synagogue of Santa Maria La Blanca at Toledo, which contains capitals of the same strange form.

We were particularly pleased with the cathedral, which, although small, is beautiful, and the more surprised, from not having heard much of it previously. There is a great deal to admire in the interior, combining, as it does, lightness with grandeur. The choir

and rejas are there, but do not injure the effect so much as in many others. The colour of the stone gives a rich deep tone to the whole building, which is considerably increased by the lovely pavement, with its diamonds of black, white, and salmon-coloured marbles, windows of rich-painted glass completing the edifice. The iron screens are magnificent, and all correspond—an unusual occurrence, which materially contributes to the beauty of the whole.

As the eye follows the lines of columns, it rests on the exquisitely moulded ribs of the groining which interlace each other, covering the vaulted roof with a network of tracery, most tastefully arranged. This cathedral is uninjured by whitewash, or any other vandalism of modern days; and in the interior, for a wonder, there is nothing over which to lament. In a hall, leading from them, the Custodia is kept on a sort of triumphal car, and in the centre stands the tomb of a son of Henry II., who was killed by falling out of the Alcazar window. The sala capitular has a splendid white and gold ceiling. The exterior of the cathedral does not equal the interior; it stands in a very awkward manner near the Plaza, and from thence the highly decorated pinnacles, which abound in the east end, give promise of a richly worked façade, but it is as plain as possible, without the slightest attempt at ornament.

Segovia suffered much during the wars of the Comuneros, when the Castilians, discontented with the conduct of Charles V. and his Flemish councillors, made a desperate struggle for the maintenance of their liberties. The Alcazar was one of the strongholds which resisted their encroachments, and by some most especial favour it has been spared alike from the ravages of war, or the steady and slow decay of time, and it remains still a most interesting record of former days. The grand entrance

tower, with its small turrets, is very imposing; it is now converted into an artillery college, and is kept in most perfect order. The suite of state apartments is quite magnificent. The artesonado ceilings are splendid specimens of that rich and singular mixture of Gothic and Moorish taste, which is so prevalent in Spain. All vary in design, each exceeding the other in richness, and the gilding looks as fresh as though it had been laid on but yesterday.

These rooms were decked out in all this splendour in the time of Henry IV., and one hall, now used as the library, has a frieze decorated with statues of all the Spanish monarchs down to Philip II. The situation of this Alcazar is very grand as you look down upon the cheerful valley beneath, but the view over the country is dreary enough, nothing but barren stony hills. All the portion devoted to the students is very well arranged, and a long gallery covered in with glass is appropriated to the use of the drawing classes. Nothing could be more civil than the soldier who did the honours, neither did he make —which somewhat surprised us—the slightest objection to Mr. T. placing his camera inside the railings to take a view; on the contrary, he seemed much interested in the proceedings, and was most anxious to have a portrait taken of himself.

Some of the gates of the town are very picturesque, particularly that of San Andrés, which is by far the finest. It is a massive portal, flanked by towers of solid masonry; but the battlemented parapet is partly ruined, and the whole structure much dilapidated. The cold in Segovia is intense in winter, and while we were there the snow fell thick, covering the ground, and resting on the roofs of the houses. It was very provoking, more particularly on St. Andrew's Day, for it prevented our seeing a grand fête held by the country people on that festival,

when they all assemble in the small Plaza, just within the gate of San Andrés. There is an old tree in the centre, round which they dance. I regretted it, especially at Segovia, where the peasant women have more character in their costume than in other towns. They all wear cloth jackets and bright yellow petticoats; the upper one is generally made of red stuff, edged with a broad green border, which they turn over their heads like a mantilla, the bright colours giving them a gayer appearance than usual, and the high-peaked hats are still worn by the men.

Altogether we were charmed with Segovia; the beautiful cathedral, the well-preserved halls of its Alcazar, the lofty towers and open arcades of the churches, which are perfect studies for the ecclesiologist, and the grand arches of its aqueduct towering above the gable ends of the houses with their wooden balconies, all form so many objects of interest, and combine to lend a peculiar attraction to this town.

We were told we should find wretched accommodation, but we were agreeably surprised at the inn where we stopped, near the large Plaza, for although the cuisine was not first-rate, we had one of the best rooms we had met with on our journey. Large, with two nice alcoves, it was more tidily furnished than usual, and the prices were much lower than in other places. We now bade adieu to Segovia, where we could have lingered much longer, had it been in a more genial season; and retracing our steps over the pass of the Navacerrada, with its pine forests, we reached Madrid in eleven hours. This is a splendid road, having been constructed not so much for the advantage of Segovia, as for the easier conveyance of royalty backwards and forwards to their alpine palace of La Granja.

Descending from the chain of the Guadarrama, you change horses at a wretched village called Las Rosas, a

bitter mockery to give such a name to a place where no plants of any description seem to grow. Bleak and wretched is the entire province, although the presence of some of the royal country palaces imparts more verdure as you approach the capital in this direction, than is seen on any other side. The palace of Madrid, occupying the commanding position it does, forms a fine object. But a by no means pleasing approach is presented in the bed of the Manzanares, whose stream is turned to account as a large wash-house for Madrid. The banks of the river are fringed, not with overshadowing trees, but with long lines of clothes hanging out to dry. Such an exhibition of the garments of a whole population was never seen, as is here displayed to the admiring gaze of the traveller, while hundreds of women are bending over the water beating and scrubbing away from morning till night. It certainly does not form an imposing entrance to a capital.

On our return to Madrid, we found everybody busily engaged in speculating on the approaching meeting of the Cortes; there were mysterious conversations, rumours of a coup-d'état, reports of some plots the Government were laying against the liberties of the country; in fact, all people agreed that something was to be done; the difficulty lay in ascertaining what that something really was to be. It was necessary that the outward semblance of the Constitution should be adhered to; this required that the Cortes should meet every year, and consequently the Parliament was convoked on the very last day the law permitted. During the lengthened recess the business of the country had been transacted by royal decrees; a more convenient and much less troublesome mode of carrying on the Government than submitting measures for discussion to a refractory Congress, and more economical than bribing deputies to secure their votes.

The important day at length arrived, and the Cortes were opened by commission, the Queen not attending in person. Business had scarcely commenced, when the government sustained a signal defeat in the election of Martinez de la Rosa, as President of the Lower House. Every one was now on the qui vive, to know what would follow; and each person, as is usual on such occasions, appeared to know more than his neighbour, while ominous shakes of the head, and most significant shrugs of the shoulder, concealed the little they really did know in the most approved manner. Some entertained fears of an émeute, and cautiously sent out to know if all was quiet in the streets, before they proceeded to the theatre, or their evening amusements; while others came to the very wise conclusion, that time would dispel the mysterious veil in which things were shrouded. On the following day, all who were fortunate enough to gain admission, flocked to the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, to be present at the grand dénouement. We joined the throng, who were hurrying to the former.

The Cortes of Spain, according to the arrangements of 1837, consists of two houses, the Senado, and the Congreso de los Diputados. The latter, are only elected for three years, and can, of course, be dissolved at the pleasure of the Sovereign; but they are obliged to reassemble within three months after the dissolution. The elections are almost always in favour of the government, and are carried on by ballot, which, however, does not contribute either to prevent bribery or intimidation, both being practised to a most extensive degree; for through the immense number of employés, which abound everywhere, ministers possess an overpowering influence, and they exercise it most unblushingly. Nothing can be quieter than the elections; there are no meetings in public, no hustings, where candidates have to win the sweet voices

of their constituents, no cheering, no colours, no enthusiasm; people walk into a room, prepared for the purpose, and deposit slips of paper in the urns, the votes having been given apparently in secret; but, notwithstanding, the result of each is as well known as if all had been done openly and in public.

At the end of the second day, the numbers are counted, and the result is proclaimed; but the fortunate candidates have no opportunity of returning thanks to the free and independent electors, who have placed them in the proud position they occupy; nor even can they make any solemn assertions or declarations, how untiringly they intend to devote themselves to their interests, and merit the honour which has been conferred on them. Nothing of all this awaits the member, who has been returned to the Spanish House of Commons. He seems to have no peculiar privilege, except that should he be absent from the capital at the time the House meets, he has the power of usurping the place of any person, who may have engaged a seat for Madrid in the diligence, or the malle-poste, and occupying it himself, in order that the House may not be deprived of his valuable services.

The members of the Upper House are nominated by the Sovereign; they are only for life; the Senate consists now of upwards of three hundred members. A senator here does not convey the same idea that a member of the House of Lords does with us; he has not necessarily a title—on the contrary, the great majority have none. There are some grandees who are senators, and many "titulos del reina," as they call those titles, whose bearers have not the honour of remaining covered in the presence of the Sovereign. The army, the church, the law, and the navy are represented in the Senate, the military having considerably the majority. The members of the cabinet have seats in both houses, sometimes attending one,

sometimes the other, according to the importance of the business which has to be transacted, but they can only vote in the one to which they belong. The Senate hold their meetings in the old convent of Doña Maria de Aragon, in the plaza of the same name; the church has been converted into the hall of assembly, which is a very handsome room, simply arranged, and seems to be very well adapted to its present purpose. There are several galleries for spectators; the Queen's throne occupies the place where formerly stood the high altar; it is on a raised platform, and in front of it are the chairs and desks of the presidents and secretaries, also the tribune, whence the members speak. Benches run down both sides, and each is provided with a comfortable writing-desk. The senators enter by two side doors, the grand centre one facing the throne, being reserved for the Sovereign. They have a very good library, and sundry committee-rooms.

The day on which we went, all the tribunes were crowded, and an unusually full attendance proclaimed the interest that was felt. There was some delay beyond the appointed hour; but at length the members of the government entered, and the appearance of Bravo Murillo in full uniform announced that he was the bearer of a royal message. One of the secretaries then read a long list of unimportant business, when Bravo Murillo ascended the tribune, and read the decree dissolving the Cortes, and convoking them for the 1st of March. "Vaya V^{d} con Dios," we all rose, and so ended this long session of 1852, which had only lasted twenty-four hours.

Bravo Murillo is not a very distingué looking person. He was a lawyer, a native of an obscure town in Estremadura, and studied for some years at Seville in the College of the Felipenses, where he is said to have imbibed that leaning towards the clergy which charac-

terised his administration. There were many notabilities present, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Toledo, and one or two other bishops; Narvaez, too, had arrived from his retreat at Loja to mix himself once more in public affairs, little dreaming how soon the orders of exile he had issued against so many, would be put in force against himself. Concha and O'Donnell, Conde de Lucena were also among those pointed out to our notice; the former who had been Captain-General of Cuba at the time of the piratical expedition made by Lopez, the latter the representative of a family of whom nearly every member fell in the civil wars of their adopted country. We drove to the Diputados afterwards, but everything there was as quiet as though no meeting had taken place.

The Congreso is a fine building in the Carrera San Geronimo, with a statue of Cervantes in the plaza in front of it. The hall itself is semi-circular, and rather theatrical in its effect, with galleries for the corps diplomatique, and other spectators. There is a stage for the President and his secretaries, and a tribune whence members may address the house if they like; but they seldom avail themselves of the privilege, preferring to speak from their seats. Over the doors, are inscribed in letters of gold the names of the various martyrs who have suffered death for the cause of the Constitution: and when one reflects on the government they have, and the character of public men in Spain, one feels tempted to think they might have sacrificed their lives in a better cause. The ceiling is painted in brilliant frescoes and very gaudy. The committee-rooms are all very prettily fitted up, the walls done in scagliola, but nothing can be more unsuitable than their general aspect for the transaction of business; they have very much the appearance of a French café, and seem as if intended rather for

the discussion of a glass of eau sucré than of the stern and important affairs of state.

The day after the Cortes were dissolved, the decree appeared in the Madrid Gazette, proposing a change in the Constitution, rendering it little more than a name, and following in fact in the steps of their neighbours, proposing to hold their sessions with closed doors, &c. To the end of this decree, another was appended, forbidding the press to make any comments upon the measure, which was to be submitted to the Cortes for approval when it met again, as the authorities considered it unwise to allow people's minds to be prejudiced. This, at all events, was honest, and more to the purpose than the idle theory by which the Spanish press is supposed to be at liberty to express its sentiments freely; while every paper, whose opinions do not harmonize with those of the government, is seized, or obliged to withdraw its leading article, in order to be able to keep faith with its subscribers. This occurs now almost every day, and the newspapers appear with the stereotyped heading: "Nuestro numero de hoy ha sido recogido," (our number of to-day has been seized). Scarcely any of these journals escape the amputation of some limb; and the mutilated newspaper is forthwith dispatched to the subscribers, deprived of that portion which would probably have possessed the greatest value in the eyes of the public.

The measure which attacked the Constitution, proved most distasteful to the military and those who had exercised their energies, defending the throne of Isabel Segunda as a constitutional Sovereign. Difficulties soon arose; the minister of war, who had signed the decree for the banishment of Narvaez, refused to proceed to extremities, and exile a few more refractory generals to the Philipines. The Bravo Murillo cabinet fell, and its chief followed Narvaez to Bordeaux. Some say it bowed to the

universal opinion of the country, which triumphed even when the press was silenced; according to others, it fell before the resistance of a small party, whose object would not have been attained had it remained in power. A new government was then formed under Roncali, which outlived the re-assembling of the Cortes but a short period. General Lersundi succeeded, and is still prime minister; but what line of policy will be pursued by the present cabinet, remains yet to be developed.

People, however, must be actuated by higher and better principles, before things can really improve in this unhappy land; they must learn to prefer public to private interests, before there can be an honest or an upright government in Spain. From the highest to the lowest, all are corrupt: the government bribe alike the electors and the elected; taxes are remitted, patronage is dispensed, trade encouraged, every engine that a ministry, backed by hundreds of employés, can command, is set in motion to return the candidate who will be most pliant when elected. People in Spain only seek to obtain office for the advantages to be derived from it, or the benefits that may accrue to their families; in fact, they do not seem to understand, there can be a possibility of people seeking office with any other view. That there are exceptions, no one can doubt; but the prevalence of the complaint is too manifest, and the state of public morality has sunk so low, that such peccadilloes are considered as a matter of course, and do not call forth either astonishment or reprehension.

The problem of constitutional government in Spain has still to be solved. With nations, as with individuals, inveterate habits will for a time survive convictions, and a long-misgoverned country may, even whilst attaining to better things, practically adhere to that which, as a system, it repudiates. Such is the condition of Spain;

virtually trammelled, whilst theoretically free—encumbered by an antiquated régime, for which it sees no substitute, and which suddenly to suspend, would derange the whole machinery of government. Hence it is, that in the midst of those able disquisitions on national rights which, so long as they were tolerated by the government, did honour to the public press of Spain, and in some sort to its people, we are startled by the spectacle of ever-pliant Parliaments, and of Executives, of whatever shades of politics, foregoing, when in power, the principles which placed them there, and falling back upon a policy incompatible with the existing institutions.* In this spirit did Narvaez banish hundreds; and in the like spirit did Bravo Murillo banish him. Whence this inconsistency, amongst a people naturally intelligent, and disposed to make the system they have chosen a reality?

It has been said, that all nations have as good government as they deserve; an axiom, which, as applied to Spain, would certainly estimate her deserts at a very humble rate. It may be true of settled countries, but Spain, it should be remembered, is in the transition state, impatient of misrule even whilst enduring it. Trained in the school of absolutism, its continuance to the present time has been with her rather a necessity than a choice; more familiar to Spaniards than acceded to by them. The very elements of a better practice have to be created, and preconceived notions not only abandoned, but enlightened ones acquired. It was probably in despair of accomplishing these objects, and of coping with the present but by a recurrence to the past, that the late

* Señor Bertram de Lis, the Minister for the Home Department under Bravo Murillo, suspended a newspaper in Barcelona after it had by his direction and for the very same cause been prosecuted and *acquitted*. But this very man, as Under-Secretary of State in a previous ministry, retired from office rather than give his sanction to a law moderately restraining the Press.

Bravo Murillo ministry, instead of seeking a legitimate remedy in the diffusion of education, &c., became in its latter days so excessively reactionary; throwing amongst the people a very firebrand, in the form of a royal decree, proposing a change in the Constitution, by which amongst other reforms, as they were called, the discussions in the Cortes were to be secret, unreported by the press, and its president named by the crown. But the measure would seem to have been as impossible as it was inexpedient.

Men are still to be found in Spain, who rather than grapple with a present though temporary evil, would stamp it with all the sacredness of law, and perpetuate the same ruinous state of things, from which it has struggled so hard to emerge. Doubtless, the race that is now springing up, will be in a less difficult position: to them the past is mere history, and thus with fewer incongruities to reconcile, it may in time bring the administration of the country to harmonize with its institutions. That ill-timed decree was fatal to the Bravo Murillo ministry. Narvaez, quick to profit by this false move of his adversaries, emerged from his retirement in Loja, and with other influential persons, sought to put in nomination for the new Cortes men on whose constitutional principles they could rely. Though this was done in rigid observance of the law, and with a moderation little characteristic of the man, he was ordered to quit Spain in forty-eight hours under the absurd pretext of inspecting the condition of the Austrian army.

Nothing could be more unwise than this step. It put him once more in the right with the nation, by making a political martyr of the man whom they feared, and whose influence it had been their constant aim to neutralize. Narvaez afterwards insisted on his return to Spain, in order to take his seat in the Senate, and

addressed one or two very energetic expostulations to the Sovereign. On the one hand the law upheld him in his demand, whilst on the other his return was opposed to the views of the court. An illustrious personage is even reported to have said, "That both could not remain in the country."

It is to be lamented that qualities so eminent as those which distinguish the Duke of Valencia, should be obscured by defects which give his enemies a vantage-ground, and in some measure neutralize their effect. His temper is said to be hasty, and imperious to his colleagues; his language, when irritated, coarse and offensive; and his system of government more befitting the camp than the cabinet. But he has ever been loyal to his Sovereign, and staunch to his followers and his party; and if he cannot command the love of the public, he knows better than most men how to profit by its fears, and has ever applied this knowledge to the maintenance of public order. His will and energy are indomitable; and his display of them in 1843, when he threw himself, a denounced man, into the very heart of Spain, with a handful of followers, in face of an opposing army, and caused it to fraternize with his little band to the downfall of the regency, will ever stamp him as a man of that rare daring of which heroes are made, and which, though seemingly rash, had its origin in sound calculations and discretion.

At that period he found an army ill paid, and consequently undisciplined, and the ready tool of ambitious and turbulent leaders. He left it, on resigning office, effective and loyal. It must be confessed, however, that his military predilections raised it to a dangerous ascendancy, and that if it has since been confined within constitutional bounds, it is due to the foresight of his successor, Bravo Murillo. The Duke of Valencia is like-

wise lavish in his expenditure, and, like most Andalucians, fond of pomp and display; forming, in this particular, a striking contrast with the sober and retired habits of the other.

The admirers of Bravo Murillo describe him as possessing a fixity of purpose, unsurpassed by Narvaez himself, tempered by courtesy, and an ear ever open to all applicants. Educated for the law, he is fluent and argumentative in the Chambers, indefatigable in business, and has unquestionably surpassed cotemporary statesmen in seeking to promote the industry and material interest of his country. During his time, Spain witnessed the novelty of having her civil as well as her military list paid to the hour; and all state contracts entered into by him were punctually met. The loss of such a man is hard to replace in Spain, making more grave the error he committed, which drove him from her counsels. General Roncali, Conde de Alcoy, who succeeded him, was an untried statesman, with no very enviable celebrity as the stern avenger of an insurrection in Alicante and Cartagena in 1843. By disclaiming the retrograde policy of his predecessors, he somewhat calmed the tempest they had raised. But the sincerity of this disclaimer might well be doubted on the part of a ministry which tyrannized over the press beyond all precedent, and tampered in the most shameless manner with the election of Deputies.

One or two instances out of a thousand may show the manner in which ministerial influence is exerted. In Pinos de la Valle, in the province of Granada, the Alcalde, whose office it is to preside over the elections, was suspended by the Governor as being adverse to the government candidate, and a claim against the town of two hundred pounds was remitted on consideration of the ministerial candidate being returned. In the town of Orgiba, in the same province, a fine of like amount was

imposed, and a further one threatened, should the ministerial candidate not be returned; and as if this were insufficient, the Alcalde was suspended, the second Alcalde was put aside, and a friend of the candidate named to conduct the voting, although a criminal suit was actually pending against him. It may be asked how a government can be allowed to exercise so shameless and baneful an influence? The discussion is, indeed, a wide and difficult one; but one predominating cause may be found in that insatiable rage for government employment which pervades Spain. It is essentially a nation of two classes—"empleados," or persons holding office, dependent on the government for their very bread, and "pretendientes," or those who are seekers after place. Had Le Sage written in the middle of the nineteenth, instead of at the commencement of the eighteenth century, he could not have depicted the system more to the life. Public employment is the primary resource of every needy man who can read and write, as well as of thousands who cannot; the very door-keepers and porters, who encumber the public offices being Legion. It has been computed that their numbers have quadrupled within the present century; and, as a consequence, the administration of the country is some four times more complex and inefficient. Nor are the social evils of such a system less disastrous, at once draining the fields of their legitimate cultivators, and drawing off from the industrious pursuits of life those of the middle classes, whose labour and enterprize should enrich the country. There is, however, in Congress a phalanx of enlightened and determined men bent on sweeping away these relics of a past time, and whose voices will at length be heard. Although forming but a minority within the walls, they carry weight and conviction without them; and to this party, and its principles, many look for the ultimate regeneration of

their country, and for rendering its institutions a reality.

These remarks may appropriately be closed in the language of one of the most distinguished of that party, lately uttered in the Cortes. In a protestation against the coercion so shamefully exercised by government towards electors, Senor Madoz said: "What manner of governing is this? Anarchy, gentlemen, is not personified in the men who are called revolutionary, but in those who act thus. All is now distorted and reversed! We of the opposition are those who most faithfully uphold and serve the throne of Isabella II. You compromise it, and are placing it in imminent danger. We will ever defend it; and perhaps those who are now jeopardizing it, may, in the hour of danger, be the first to fly. Let the truth be said: I am one of those men who have most faith in a constitutional system. But my faith declines when I witness such things. We who have that faith should retire to our own homes, and proclaim ourselves partizans of a policy of retirement, in order not to become accomplices in this child's play, in which loyalty has no part, and in which meanness and intrigue are everything. For myself, I declare that if in 1853 we do not return to the pure forms of representative government, I shall not come again to Congress, for I have no wish to play a part in such a farce. Could we but hear from the House one word in reprobation of such enormities—could we but see one member of the government protest against such conduct, and display a wish to punish the offenders, I should be somewhat consoled, and still believe in the possibility of a representative government in Spain."

AT THE FOUNTAIN.

CHAPTER XVII.

Negra, ruinosa, sola y olvidada
hundidos ya los pies entre la arena
alli yace Toledo abandonada,
azotada del viento y del turbion.

ZORRILLA.

TOLEDO—CATHEDRAL—CAPILLA MAYOR—MUZARABIC CHAPEL AND LITURGY—SAN JUAN DE LOS REYES—SWORD MANUFACTORY—BRIDGE OF SAN MARTIN—DECLINE OF TOLEDO—CASTLE OF SAN CERVANTES—BRIDGE OF ALCANTARA—ALCAZAR—MOORISH REMAINS—DEPARTURE—CORDOBA—THE MOSQUE—SAN NICOLAS—THE ANGELUS—CAMPO SANTO—ERMITAS AND THEIR OCCUPANTS—THE SIERRA—RETURN TO SEVILLE—CONCLUSION.

TOLEDO is, perhaps, the most interesting town in Spain, containing, as it does, beauty of situation with historic recollections. It is but a short distance from Madrid; a drive of about six hours over rather a good road taking you from the modern to the ancient capital. What a contrast do not those two cities present! the one, the mere butterfly of to-day, looking as though it had been raised by royal decree to suit the purpose of the hour; the other, throned upon her seven hills, affording in her ruined

walls and crumbling towers, the history of Spain's past glories. As you approach Toledo, the general aspect of the country improves, the broad Tagus is seen flowing through the plains, and entering the deep gorge formed by the cliffs on which the city itself is built; and after girdling the town, it continues its course until it loses itself in the ocean below the noble city, which ought to have been the capital of the Peninsula.

Toledo is entered by a massive gateway, over which the Imperial arms are placed; and as you ascend the steep declivities, you pass the Puerta del Sol, a fine Arabic portal no longer used. Climbing the hill, you cross the picturesque Zocodover, the great plaza, and arrive at the Fonda de los Caballeros, a clean little inn, where a good-natured old lady is ready to bid you welcome. The general appearance of Toledo differs from that of any other Spanish city; the old capital of the Recaredos, and centre of the Gothic empire, it can boast of great antiquity; as the seat of the Christian primacy, it has ever been the head-quarters of a wealthy hierarchy; the abode of prelates whose virtues have been an honour to the Church over which they presided, and whose wealth was ever expended in benefiting the needy, and encouraging art.

The streets of Toledo are narrow and tortuous, and the steep hills on which the town is built render it a constant succession of ascents and descents. The houses are lofty, and built of a dull reddish brick; they have hardly any windows looking into the street, and present therefore a most gloomy appearance, offering a complete contrast to the bright white and green streets of Seville. At Toledo, too, instead of light "cancelas," massive portals afford an endless study, with their rich variety of decoration, and the heavy wooden doors present an impenetrable bar to any stray peeps into the interior of the houses. The

cornices of these entrances are ornamented with large stone balls, a style peculiar to this place, and the doors themselves are studded with iron nails, the heads worked in many different patterns. The principal street leading from the Zocodover is most picturesque, and the perspective is bounded by the graceful tower of the cathedral rising to the height of three hundred feet.

This edifice is naturally the first object of interest in the city. It is a museum of Spanish art, containing tributes from successive generations, offering specimens of every style from the thirteenth century, when it was raised on the foundation of a more ancient temple, to that of the eighteenth, when the wealth and taste and religious enthusiasm, which had inspired the people in preceding centuries, had died away. The exterior is disappointing; choked up by mean buildings, and rather sunk in a hollow, you might pass it by without even being aware of the existence of a cathedral. The façade from the plaza is fine, though only one tower is completed. In the interior the richness of detail rather detracts from the effect of the whole, and the columns are too massive for the building; they rest on heavy pedestals, and all has been spoiled by a slight touch of whitewash, although the stone itself is of a very pale white colour. In Seville the grandeur of the building prevents one from entertaining the slightest wish to examine it in detail; in Toledo, on the contrary, there are so many beauties, so many objects of interest inviting a careful scrutiny, that you feel as if you must dwell upon each in succession.

The present edifice was commenced in 1227, in the reign of Saint Ferdinand, and it was not completed until the time when the Crescent finally bowed before the power of Castile. During this long period it received constant additions and embellishments, and the talents of the first artists were called into requisition to enrich it

with the productions of their genius. The carved stalls of the choir are triumphs of the chisel of Borgoña and Berruguete, the gilded reja the master-piece of Villalpanda, and every chapel offers something worthy of note. The first point of attraction is the Capilla Mayor, where the high altar is enclosed by a most elaborate screen of rich Gothic stone-work, partially gilt, and adorned with numbers of statues. The retablo is very costly, and every niche is filled with figures, amongst them those of Alfonso VIII., and of the shepherd who guided the Christian arms to victory, under that monarch, at the Navas de Tolosa.

There is likewise a statue of Alfonso VI., and opposite to him one of a Moslem Alfaquí, which recals an incident in the early history of Toledo creditable alike to both Moor and Christian. When the Moslems were forced to yield to the triumphant arms of Alfonso VI., they surrendered only on one condition, that they should be allowed to continue the celebration of their religious ceremonies in the great mosque. This was guaranteed them by the Sovereign, and the Christian army took possession of Toledo. The conditions were faithfully fulfilled by Alfonso, but unfortunately he had soon occasion to leave the city and proceed to Leon, leaving the government in charge of his Queen Constance. She was a native of France, and so was Bernardo, then Archbishop of Toledo; and during the King's absence they determined on breaking faith with the inhabitants, and accordingly seized upon the mosque, converting it into a place of Christian worship. The Mahommedans instantly had recourse to Alfonso, who was highly indignant at his royal word having been broken; he returned in all possible haste to Toledo to punish the Queen and her adviser. But the injured Moslems, unwilling that any harsh measures should be taken, went out to meet the King,

headed by one of their chief men, an Alfaquí, who was held in great respect, and besought Alfonso not to carry out his designs of vengeance, but to pardon the Queen and all who had joined in committing so great and flagrant an act of injustice; the entreaties of the Alfaquí prevailed, the King forgave the culprits, and the statue of the Moslem, who behaved so generously, was erected in the Capilla Mayor.

Several of the early Kings are buried in this chapel, and here amid royalty lies the great Cardinal Mendoza, one of the most virtuous prelates that ever graced the archiepiscopal throne; the confessor of Isabella, her companion and adviser in the council and the camp, who tempered the sternness of the age in which he lived with the mildness and gentleness of his character. His sepulchre is richly ornamented in the plateresque style, and the portion of the edifice where it stands was considerably enlarged by Ximenez, who succeeded Mendoza in the primacy. The beautiful chapel of Santiago in the centre of the aisle was erected by the great Constable Alvaro de Luna, who after enjoying the favour of his Sovereign for so many years ended his days upon the scaffold in the great plaza of Valladolid. He not only built the chapel, but had likewise prepared a sumptuous tomb for himself of bronze gilt, ornamented with statues so arranged as to rise during the celebration of mass. This was, however, destroyed during his lifetime, and the present sepulchre of rich Gothic work was raised by order of Isabella, who had doubtless, after the lapse of years, learned to do justice to the character of the man her father had so grievously wronged. The inscription merely intimates that he ended his days in 1453. There are many other fine sepulchres both in this and the adjoining chapels, all altar tombs, of which there are so many beautiful examples in this country.

There is another chapel, "de los Reyes nuevos," containing the ashes of many of the Sovereigns of Castile; amongst others, of Henry of Trastamara; the whole is richly ornamented in white and gold. In the sacristy is preserved a most lovely custodia, the work of Enrique de Arfe, made by order of Ximenez; as a specimen of working in gold and silver, it is unequalled. It stands sixteen feet high, representing a Gothic temple, decorated with two hundred and sixty statues, all gilt, and of most delicate workmanship; in the centre is a remonstrance which belonged to Isabella, and was purchased at her death by the Cardinal.

At one end of the aisles is the Muzarabic chapel, erected by Ximenez, in order to preserve the memory of this ancient ritual, said to be the earliest used by the primitive Christians of the Peninsula. It was the one used in the time of the Goths, and was retained by the Christian inhabitants of Toledo, while the city was under the dominion of the Moors, during which period six churches were still consecrated to its services. The oldest of these was founded in the year 554; the most modern in 701. The buildings themselves have been so often modernized, that no trace of the original portions remain. The inhabitants clung with affection to the primitive ritual of their ancestors; but after the conquest, they were obliged to adopt the Roman liturgy, which was introduced into most of their churches. Ximenez, however, anxious that it should not be lost, erected this chapel in the cathedral, in order that the Muzarabic mass might be said there daily, and had it printed at Alcalá de Henares.

This service, which was performed in Toledo unaltered during the whole time the city was in possession of the Infidels, is particularly interesting, the more so from its having been transmitted from such early days, and so

carefully treasured by the prelates, even after it had been exchanged for another. This mass is still occasionally said in the old Muzarabic churches. The chapel erected by Ximenez, is very simple; on its walls are frescoes of the taking of Oran in 1508, that celebrated expedition when the Cardinal led his troops in person, and wielded the sword in one hand, while he held the crosier in the other.

In the nave is a Gothic chapel, on the spot where the Virgin is supposed to have descended to present the "casulla," the cassock, to San Ildefonso. This is the great miracle of Toledo, and allusions to it meet the eye in every direction; it has ever been a favourite subject with Spanish artists, more particularly in this diocese, over which San Ildefonso ruled. Cardinal Rojas erected this shrine in 1610; and within its cage of lace-like Gothic work, the identical slab on which the Virgin is said to have rested her foot, is carefully guarded. Bas-reliefs represent the miracle to which the chapel is dedicated.

The sun's rays stream in on all these precious objects through windows of painted glass; and though the colour cannot vie in depth or brilliancy with those of Leon, yet they heighten the general effect, and shed a sweet and softened light around. This brief sketch conveys but a very imperfect idea of this lovely cathedral, which possesses so many treasures of art, speaking of the magnificence of a long line of prelates, who loved to enrich the pearl of their diocese. But their wealth is now a thing of bye-gone days; the canons and chapter of Toledo, whose number and whose riches had no parallel, have vanished; the primate lives the greater portion of the year at Madrid, and the city, ruined and deserted, has received its final death-blow in the impoverishment of that hierarchy, whose princely revenues were spent within its walls. Large and noble cloisters are attached to the

cathedral, once adorned with frescoes, but now they have almost disappeared.

Perhaps after the cathedral, the most interesting monument—at least, of Gothic date—in Toledo, is the Church of San Juan de los Reyes, formerly belonging to a Franciscan convent, founded by the Catholic Sovereigns after the conclusion of the war with Portugal. It was completed in 1476, and much favoured by Ferdinand and Isabella, who enriched it with an extensive library and other valuable objects. Its beautiful Gothic exterior was covered with many heavy chains, mournful reminiscences of the Christian captives, who were released at the taking of Malaga and other towns. Some few still remain, but the great majority have been taken away; and the destruction of this beautiful convent, is one of the gravest charges which the Spaniards have to bring against the French.

The building was sacked, the splendid library committed to the flames, and the exquisite church, quite a triumph of florid architecture, was converted into a stable by the French troops. The rich ornaments, the delicate traceries, in which occur the initials of Ferdinand and Isabella, the gorgeous armorial bearings, and the elaborate inscription fringing the cornice, are all beautiful; but its painted glass windows have been destroyed, and all the statues within reach are mutilated. The ruined cloisters are still exquisite, although unroofed and despoiled of their ornaments; and the passages and corridors have been converted into a receptacle for the bad pictures which were expelled from the convents.

Leaving the gate, and descending the steep hill, you arrive at the verdant plains; a pleasant walk then leads to the sword manufactory, where the famed steel of Toledo is still fashioned. It is a large white building, and was erected for this purpose in the reign of

Charles III. The blades are all beaten with the hand, although for other branches of the manufacture, they use machinery driven by water power. The swords for the army are mostly made here, and some specimens of the ancient productions are preserved in a small cabinet. When we were there, they had none for sale, but we saw some of those wonderful swords so admirably tempered as to admit of their being bent into a circle. They were unfinished, and they asked about five pounds for them in that state; ten, being the price when completed.

Returning to the town, we passed the Basilica of Santa Leocadia, now called the Cristo de la Vega, on account of a remarkable crucifix contained in it, about the wonder-working power of which many legends are extant. This church was erected in 618, and within its walls were celebrated the early councils of Toledo. Close by is the noble bridge of San Martin spanning the gorge, with its quaint old gateways. Built in 1203, it was destroyed by a flood; again raised, it suffered much injury during the civil wars in the time of Pedro the Cruel, and was finally rebuilt by Archbishop Tenorio.

A curious anecdote is attached to the erection of this bridge. It appears that when nearly completed, and nothing but the keystone remained to be placed, the architect discovered he had committed some grievous error, and that on the removal of the scaffolding, the whole would fall. In vain, he sought to devise means by which to obviate the evil and save his reputation. Returning to his home, he confided to his wife the cause of his despair, telling her at the same time, that he never could survive such disgrace and ruin. The difficulty, which to him seemed insurmountable, was overcome by her ingenuity. That night, she silently left the house, and proceeding to the bridge, set fire to

the scaffolding in several places. The flames spread rapidly, and the whole giving way, the fame of the architect was saved, for the fall of the bridge was attributed to accident. He was employed to reconstruct a second; when, profiting by past experience, he this time committed no mistake, and the structure still exists.

Crossing the San Martin, a lovely walk may be taken round the hills on the opposite side, returning by the bridge of Alcántara, which spans the river at the other extremity of the town. Nothing can be wilder than the scenery; the granite rocks tossed about in strange craggy forms, crowned by the buildings of the town, all alike presenting a colour so uniform, that except under strong effects of light and shade, it is hardly possible to distinguish the one from the other. As you wind along the cliffs, you reach a small hermitage dedicated to the Virgen de la Valle, and from this spot, Toledo is truly magnificent.

However great may be the souvenirs of other Spanish cities, there are none which carry one back so many centuries. Others call forth recollections and tales of the wars of Moor and Christian; but in Toledo the mind may dwell on still earlier days, when the Gothic monarchs ruled in Spain. When their descendants resumed the dominion, which Roderick had lost, Toledo saw its ancient line of kings and prelates re-established, and it became the cradle of the glorious Castilian tongue, which may still be heard here in its greatest purity.

It was long the favourite residence of the Sovereigns; but after the succession of the House of Austria, it was deserted for Madrid, and, in course of time, her stately Alcázar was destroyed by the Portuguese; in a later invasion her beautiful convents were pillaged, and the hands of Spaniards themselves have since completed her ruin. Her hierarchy and vast religious establishments

were all that remained to support her; and now that they have been deprived of their revenues, she remains a lifeless sepulchre; her streets desolate and silent, inhabited by only a few thousand inhabitants, where once upwards of two hundred thousand lived in the enjoyment of wealth and prosperity. Now, it is a city rich in nothing, but the memory of the past.

Wandering along the rugged barren hills, you approach the old Moorish castle, which stands on a height commanding the bridge of Alcántara, and facing the Alcázar; it bears the strange name of San Cervantes, corrupted from that of San Servando. It was originally a monastery, dedicated to that saint, and was founded by Alfonso VI. soon after the conquest. Its defenceless condition outside the town, rendered it, however, a most uncomfortable residence for the monks, who soon abandoned it to more warlike occupants — the Templars, who maintained a strong garrison within its walls, till the period of their suppression. It then fell into ruins, and seems, from the mention of it in the dramas of Calderon de la Barca, to have been even in his days a deserted spot, frequented only by those who sought to arrange affairs of honour. In the valley below, is a curious remnant of Moorish work connected with one of the most fabulous and romantic incidents in Spanish story. It is supposed to have been the palace of the Infanta Galiana.

"Galiana de Toledo
muy hermosa á maravilla
la mora mas celebrada
de toda la morería."

The ruins prove that it was once a handsome dwelling; it stands in a charming situation, close to the river, and is known by the name of the Huerta del Rey. The exterior is plain, and we were not a little surprised on

entering what appeared to be only a peasant's cottage, so feebly lighted, that the eye could with difficulty penetrate the darkness, to see on those walls blackened with the smoke of ages, traces of Moorish windows and arabesque designs, which would be worthy of the halls of the Alhambra.

The road to Aranjuez leads along this valley, and the first portion is laid out as an Alameda. From hence there is a splendid view of the Alcázar, towering above the houses on the opposite side of the river, the gorge between spanned by the bold arch of the bridge of Alcántara. The commanding position, upon which the Alcázar stands, induced Charles V. to select it as the site of his palace. He entrusted its erection to Herrera and Covarrubias, and it was one of his favourite residences in Spain. Subsequently burnt by the Portuguese, it was partially restored by the Primate Lorenzana, towards the end of the last century, who devoted it to the manufacture of silk, an art for which Toledo was once celebrated. But it was destroyed during the French invasion, and little but the outer walls and magnificent staircase are now remaining of this massive edifice.

Returning to the Zocodover, you pass the Hospital de la Cruz, built by the great Cardinal Mendoza. Its portal is of exquisite plateresque architecture. It is now converted into a school for the infantry, in the same manner as the Alcázar at Segovia has been appropriated to the education of artillery officers.

Many picturesque old buildings are grouped together in the neighbourhood, and in a street adjoining is the convent of Santa Fé, devoted to noble ladies, where, as there is no "clausura," strangers may enter. The number of monastic establishments formerly existing in this city appears perfectly incredible. Seventeen monasteries and thirty-two nunneries occupied the best

part of Toledo. The rage for founding religious houses in olden times reached a dangerous extent; Mendoza would not allow of any being erected during his prelacy, considering that the practice had attained a height which was injurious alike to the welfare of the town and the true interests of religion; but after his death they greatly increased in number, and half the area of Toledo was soon covered with monastic buildings, a circumstance which has very materially contributed to accelerate its fall. The nuns in this convent wear the cross of Calatrava embroidered on their black robes; there are but six remaining, and they have the privilege of returning to their houses in case of illness.

The Plaza of the Zocodover is charmingly picturesque; its houses are ornamented with wooden balconies, which seem in a very dilapidated condition; but a desire to improve has even reached Toledo. One side has been recently modernised, and painted, and arranged in the most approved modern taste. Just outside the town is the noble hospital commenced by Archbishop Tavera, one of the great primates who shed lustre on the reign of Charles V. He died, however, before this building was far advanced, and it was completed by his heirs. Tavera's sepulchre of white marble reposes in front of the high altar of the church, a chef-d'œuvre of Berruguete, and a monument worthy of the founder of the hospital. The patio is magnificent, crossed by a covered colonnade from the great portal to the entrance of the church. Such institutions as these will long preserve the memory of the prelates, whose enormous treasures were always lavished on some object which might embellish the seat of their diocese, or benefit its inhabitants.

Many Moorish remains may still be seen here; the two most important, perhaps from their size, are the

ancient synagogues, now called the Santa Maria la Blanca and the Transito: the former bears more the form of a basilica than of a synagogue, but the horse-shoe arches, and the strange capitals of the columns are evidently Moorish. It is now in a deplorable state of dilapidation. An inscription over the doorway details all the various changes it has suffered, and the different purposes to which it has been destined.

It would take pages to describe all the different objects of interest in this town; every street presents something to arrest the eye, and those who have time to wander about, and penetrate into out-of-the-way corners, may find much to reward their curiosity. In the church of Santo Tome hangs the master-piece of El Greco; and the old Arabic tower, with its horse-shoe arches, is extremely picturesque. Here and there some ruined archway or richly-decorated ceiling, some noble saloon with its arabesque patterns, or graceful window with its marble column, reminds one of the Arab rule.

Our tour in Castile was at an end: we had visited most of the principal cities of this portion of the Peninsula, and were going to retrace our steps to Andalucia.

The plains of Castile present little to interest the traveller. Wide and solitary steppes, as lonely almost as the Desert—affording indeed signs of cultivation, but scarcely a trace of the hand which tills them—meet the eye in every direction, and render a journey through them one of dull and unvarying monotony; but though the rural districts of Castile offer little to call forth one's admiration, her cities are replete with interest.

Burgos, with her royal sepulchres; Leon, with her elegant cathedral; Valladolid, with her mediæval edifices; Segovia, with her Roman aqueduct and Moorish Alcazar; Salamanca, with her noble colleges; Toledo, with her palaces, her convents, and her hospitals, all in turn arrest

attention: the Escorial on the terraced slopes of its granite mountains, the proudest religious monument in the world; and in the plains below, Madrid, the modern capital, which has usurped the place of all those venerable towns. But with all these charms, although we could linger long in Castile to study her noble edifices, and admire and appreciate the more quiet and sterling character of her inhabitants, still for a residence, Andalucia is far preferable, where the towns do not wear the air of loneliness and ruin that stamps the cities of Castile, and where all is still clothed with a certain character of nationality.

And thither our steps were now turned, and gladly we found ourselves again at the rocky defiles of the Sierra Morena. The prospect is enchanting, as one leaves dull La Mancha behind, and the fertile valleys and olive-crowned hills of Andalucia appear in the distance. All looks bright and sunny, and the distant ranges of the Sierras, covered with their snowy mantle, bound the blue horizon. Winter has been exchanged for spring; for even in December, nature has assumed a verdant garb, young corn is sprouting up, and small irises cover the sides of the road with their deep-blue flowers. Bailen, Andujar, are passed, and at length after a journey of eight-and-forty hours, the towers of Cordoba break upon the view, backed by the villa-covered heights of the Sierra Morena, and washed by the waters of the Guadalquivir. All breathes an air of oriental luxury and enjoyment, after the stern capital of the Goths; the granite rocks are exchanged for feathery palms, the stony gorge of the Tagus for plains where the orange and the lemon perfume the air, and the aloe and cactus border the wayside, while the bright green of the pine clothes the neighbouring hills.

Cordoba retains but small traces of her former grandeur.

The traveller laments to find that the far-famed city of the Caliphs has degenerated into a third-rate provincial town; its population rapidly decreasing, and nothing within its walls to attract even a passing notice, save the half-Moorish, half-Christian pile, which once was classed as second only in sanctity to the great mosque of Mecca itself

The accounts handed down to posterity by the Arab historians of the splendour of Cordoba in the reign of the Abdurrahmans seem to border on the fabulous; but making due allowance for eastern exaggeration, we may believe that the Moslem court in those days, both in costly magnificence and in the learning of those who flocked to it, must have been far beyond those of cotemporary European nations. In the universities of Cordoba and of Fez, the sciences were sedulously cultivated, and the monarchs themselves encouraged the pursuit of knowledge, both by precept and example.

Cordoba lies on the north bank of the Guadalquivir, in the midst of a wide and fertile plain, covered with olive-trees, backed by the undulating range of the Sierra Morena, whose dusky hue is produced by the profuse quantity of underwood with which it is covered. Within it is lonely and deserted; and although the circuit of the walls is larger than that of Seville, Cordoba can only count about one-third of the population of the latter—not more than thirty or forty thousand inhabitants, where once dwelt above a million. The houses are low, carefully whitewashed, the streets wretchedly paved, and but few windows looking into them; in fact dead walls in many places face the street, in this respect offering even a more oriental appearance than Seville. Many of the old grandees still reside here: proud and uneducated, they pass their lives in ignorance of the world around them. This town had formerly a convent in nearly every street, buildings which are now mouldering into decay, or

converted into barracks and other government offices. There is an enormous plaza, which might be handsome from the size and regularity of its houses, were it kept in anything approaching to order, but it is a dirty, untidy place; its very uniformity preventing its even laying claim to being picturesque.

Everything in this ancient city sinks into utter insignificance when compared with the one centre of attraction, the Mosque. A lofty Moorish arch leads into a court, planted with orange-trees and adorned with fountains. Beautiful as this orange court still is, how much more beautiful must it have been before the large doors which led into the building were blocked up, when through them could be seen the opening vista of the temple, supported by its thousand columns. Then, myriads of lamps, scented with the perfumes of aloes and precious woods, shed light through the edifice, foreshadowing in their brilliancy the paradise in store for the followers of the Prophet. Within stood the Mihrab, the chapel in which the copy of the Koran was guarded, where lay the sacred volume written by the Caliph Othman, enshrined in its golden case, studded with emeralds and rubies; the ceiling formed of one solid piece of marble, sculptured in the form of a shell; and around, columns and interlacing arches and walls resplendent with gold and rich mosaics.

Where now are the followers of the Prophet? Another race and another faith have appropriated the structure to their service; but the sacred mosque of the children of Ishmael and the effeminate luxury which became their sensual creed do not harmonize with the severity of a Christian temple. It has lost the beauty and splendour with which it was clothed, and the worship to which it is now dedicated seems out of place within its walls.

There is not anything to which the Mosque of Cordoba can be compared. As you enter, the multitude of columns have an almost bewildering effect; there is no one particular object on which to dwell, aisle after aisle appears, long vistas of columns intersect each other, and the double horse-shoe arches, on which the roof is supported, increase the seeming confusion. The building is low—a defect rendered still more striking by the vast area of the edifice; and the artesonado ceiling, which once glittered like those of the Alhambra, has given place to a vaulted whitewashed roof. The columns, although composed of costly marbles, and brought with vast expense and trouble from different lands, yet from having been originally taken from still more ancient temples, they present a want of uniformity, which considerably detracts from the harmony of the entire building. They have no pedestals or bases, but spring straight out of the pavement, which is composed of coarse common flags. The eye is intercepted, as it tries in vain to sweep through the centre aisles; and when you advance to discover the cause of the obstruction, you suddenly find yourself in a lofty Gothic church, its upward lines soaring high above the low domes which encircle it.

It is much to be regretted that any part of the ancient mosque should have been removed, and that rather a new and suitable cathedral had not been erected on some other site. Yet we may console ourselves with the reflection, that if it had not been converted to its present purpose, it would probably have been lost to posterity.

The Mihrab is now carefully surrounded by iron railings, and although they mar the effect, they preserve it from destruction. It has not been converted into a chapel, and may still be contemplated as a mere object of art. The adjacent archway has been sadly interfered with, and a large painting by Cespedes covers

the elegant arabesques. The ceiling over the entrance to the Mihrab is beautiful, and the mosaics within give it a very Byzantine appearance; and were it not for the presence of the horse-shoe arch, one would be reminded of the ancient Greek churches, which are so richly adorned with this style of ornament.

The Christian addition taken by itself is rather fine, and the carved seats of the choir are exquisite. There is a small sacristy behind the high altar, and the old man who conducted us through the mosque seemed to treat the things contained in it with very little respect. He was a strange character, and said he had belonged to the cathedral for the last thirty years. He told us that he had been a prisoner in France, and gave us a long account of all that the French troops had stolen from the cathedral, and told us how Murat had entertained serious thoughts of making the custodia a centre-piece for his dining-table. I never was in a church which seemed to have so little religious reverence attached to it, either in the conduct of the people, who made it a mere thoroughfare, or in that of the sacristans and those connected with the building.

In the sacristy is a heavy-looking monument of one of the prelates, displaying a greater expenditure of money than good taste; and in the room where the church plate is preserved is an exquisite custodia, another master-piece of the Arfes, who, fortunately for Spain, flourished just at the right period to fashion into forms of elegance and beauty the wealth which the discovery of a new world was bringing to her shores. Covered with silver-gilt statues, it is very similar in design to the one at Toledo. There are some very beautiful crosses likewise preserved here. On the staircase, descending to a sub-terranean chapel, is the white banner borne by St. Ferdinand at the conquest of the city.

Day after day we returned to this cathedral to contemplate its wilderness of arches and columns. It was erected on the site of an ancient Christian church. When the Arabs conquered Cordoba, they pursued their usual custom of dividing with the inhabitants their principal place of worship, and dedicating one half of it to their own faith. But the Moslem population increased so rapidly, that their portion of the building became too small, and the additions constantly made to it rendered it so inconvenient, that when Abdurrahman ascended the throne, he expressed a wish to raze it to the ground and build a new one in its place. To this, the Christians demurred as being a violation of the treaty agreed to on the capitulation of the city; but at length the caliph succeeded in gaining what he required, by giving them money to erect another church wholly for themselves.

This mosque, commenced in the eighth century, was embellished by each succeeding monarch, and received its largest addition in the days of Almansur. It remained in all its splendour until the conquest of Saint Ferdinand, and was then converted into a cathedral; but it was reserved for the days of Charles V. to see the vandalism committed, which destroyed the centre of the Moorish portion in order to adapt it better to Christian worship.

The orange court is now filled with loiterers who sit basking in the sunshine, or stand grouped around the fountains, filling their jars with water. It is a pity that the tower should be of such modern date, and not more in keeping with the scene than the present erection. The eye would willingly rest on a tower, such as the Giralda of Seville, or one of those exquisite minarets, which contribute so much to adorn the city of Cairo.

The mosque stands not far from the bridge, which is likewise Moorish, and which is guarded at one end

by an old castle, called the Calahorra. The view just beyond, looking back on the town, is extremely pretty; but it has a lonely and deserted appearance. There is a promenade along the banks of the river, but the inhabitants prefer walking in a small plaza, near one of the city gates, or else on a esplanade, which has lately been formed above the bridge.

In this square is a very pretty tower belonging to the Church of San Nicolas. It has inscribed on it in large letters Paciencia Obedencia. This is said to have been done by way of a gentle reproof to the inmates of the convent of San Martin, which formerly existed on the spot now occupied by the square. It seems they objected to this church being erected so close opposite to them, as it would impede the prospect they then enjoyed; but their remonstrances were of no avail, and when the tower was completed, the words enjoining patience and obedience were placed upon its walls, that they might always have before their eyes, what it was so advisable they should practise.

One lovely evening we were seated on the benches in the plaza, and the promenade was crowded with gay and idle loungers, when the Angelus sounded on the stillness of the air, and instantly every head was uncovered until the echo had died away, and the appointed prayer was uttered. This custom, once so general, is now almost obsolete, and this was the only time we ever noticed it during the whole of our lengthened stay in the country.

Cordoba does not appear rich in equipages, as far as carriages for hire are concerned; there were but two in the town, and those two were never to be had during the whole of our stay. We saw one or two four-in-hands, but the liveries were not quite in character with the number of the horses, and the coachman who was

driving one of them, had made himself comfortable by taking off his jacket. It is quite a penance to walk in the streets of Cordoba; they are so wretchedly paved, and driving, of course, must be still worse, unless the springs are better than they are generally in Spanish vehicles. At night, too, they are not particularly well lighted, the small lamps, burning before the shrines of saints, constituting the principal medium of illumination.

There is but little to see in the town itself, after a pilgrimage to the mosque has been made. We went to visit the gardens of the old Alcázar, where a few plants still flourish, and beside them rise the tall towers once inhabited by the Inquisition, now occupied as a prison.

Just outside the walls, is the cemetery—the best kept that I have seen in Spain. The coffins are placed, according to the general practice, in niches round the wall; but all have ornamented tablets, some with very poetical inscriptions, and all most carefully attended to. A small chapel, with a residence for one or two of the clergy, who have the charge of it, forms the entrance; and one of them, who really seemed to take a pride in it, showed us over the whole. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the gardens, of the rooms in the house, and the two pretty courts on each side of the church. It was laid out in 1834, on the ground belonging to the ancient hermitage of the Virgen de la Salud, to whom it is dedicated. Her image is placed over the high altar, and my companion told me it had been discovered, on that spot, about four hundred years ago, enclosed in a leaden case, having probably been thus concealed while the Moors were in possession of the city. Altogether, this Campo Santo is quite a model that might be imitated to advantage in other Spanish towns.

Some portions of the walls are extremely picturesque, and the towers and gateways are in very good preservation; but the dust renders a walk round them anything but a pleasant undertaking. The great charm of this place lies in the beautiful rides which abound in the neighbourhood. Clothed with the most magnificent verdure, the Sierra Morena presents quite a novel attraction in Spanish scenery, being covered with cortijos, where people reside for two or three months in the spring, and enjoy the charming scenery around. They see a great deal of society likewise, and their friends from the town spend the day with them, and dance under the shadow of the orange-groves. Most of the noble and wealthy families have here their country-houses, some of which are very handsomely furnished, and the tall and feathering palms that overshadow them recall the fact that here this graceful tree was first cultivated, on its introduction into Spain.

There is a charming villa called Arrizafa, a short distance from the town, belonging to the landlord of the hotel, where his guests may stay if they prefer it; and after you have passed this and approach the mountains, the scenery increases in beauty. Here the carob grows into a forest tree, the scraggy branches of the evergreen oak twist across the paths, and the ground is covered with plants of the many-coloured cistus Myrtles and multitudes of shrubs laden with bright blossoms, and groves of chesnuts and pines vary the scene; and one of the highest peaks is dotted with white houses, dwellings of lonely anchorites, known by the name of the Ermitas.

The site is well chosen; it commands the whole Campiña, as the flat country round Cordoba is called, from the castle-crowned rock of Almodovar to the distant peaks of the snowy mountains, while the broad river

meanders through the plains. The hermitages are surrounded by a low wall, and once within the enclosure you ascend to the principal house occupied by the Hermano Mayor, where there is a small chapel sufficiently capacious for the brethren. One or two portraits hanging upon the wall of an adjoining room, preserve the recollection of the members of some distinguished Cordobese families, who have ended their days in the seclusion of this retreat Here the knights of old came to expiate lives misspent amid the din and turmoil of the world—some perhaps moved by feelings of true repentance, although a favourite Spanish proverb would put a less religious construction on their motives, for it says: "When the wolf can find no more sheep to eat, he turns friar."

The Hermano Mayor had entered the Ermitas at the age of eighteen, and he now numbered seventy-eight years. For sixty years he had dwelt there apart from all the changing events of the world. Each hermit has a tiny house, containing one room with two alcoves; one for his oratory, the other for sleeping. Every house has a small garden round it, whose walls are trellised with vines, their purple bunches hanging in rich luxuriance. They live upon the produce of the ground they cultivate, and the charity of their neighbours; and one member of the community goes every month to Cordoba to beg. A pleasant idle life, well suited to those who delight in doing nothing, sanctified as it is, under the garb of religion.

One of the hermits was a most original character; he was a jolly-looking old man, and seemed delighted at the opportunity of talking about the world he had abandoned. He made us sit down while he related his history, heedless of the additional penance he would doubtless have to perform for indulging in such mundane conversation. He had been a colonel in the army, and served during

the war of independence; after the conclusion of which he travelled in France for three or four years. He said he had seen enough of the world, for he had tried it in all its phases. He married, and had an only child, but in 1832 both his wife and daughter were carried off by fever on the same day; and shortly after, disgusted with everything, he threw up his retiring pension of one hundred and forty pounds a year, and withdrew to the desert of Cordoba. He had, however, mistaken his vocation. He spoke in no terms of admiration of his Rosarios and Oraciones, which he seemed to consider great nonsense; and I have no doubt before long he will return to the world he has forsaken. Our friend was very amusing, but he rather destroyed the poetry of the scene: the situation is far more romantic than the inmates, for the most vivid imagination would have found it difficult to conjure up anything even bordering on the sentimental out of the hermits themselves.

Many a lovely ride may be taken from the Ermitas into the very heart of the Sierra through the pine forests; and as you cross the vast olive-yards, you see the ground covered with beautiful garden-roses, which were once cultivated here to a great extent. Even the Arab historians dilate upon the celebrity Cordoba had obtained for the abundance of its roses. The Sierra Morena is rich in mineral wealth: it contains an immense coal-field, the produce of which is very good; but there are no roads or means of transport, except on mules or horses, and the expense attendant on raising the coal, and carrying it, is consequently very great. The famous quicksilver mines of Almaden are well known, and the lead ore, which abounds, is of very superior quality. Some charming excursions might be made in this Sierra, and many picturesque villages, crowned with old castles, are dotted about amid the forests. On the slopes of one of the

hills, looking over the Campiña, stands one of those princely monasteries formerly occupied by the followers of St. Jerome; it is needless to add that it is now a mere heap of ruins. It lies embosomed in orange-groves, surrounded by luxuriant olives and evergreen oaks, and now forms a most convenient resort for parties of pleasure from Cordoba, who dine in the old refectory of the fathers, making the walls re-echo to many a merry laugh and joyous conversation. Just below in the valley, may be seen a large wall enclosing a considerable portion of ground; it presents as uninviting an appearance as can well be imagined, and yet the piece of ground within that ruined wall is said to have been once covered with magnificent buildings. The account given by eastern writers of the splendid city and palace of Az-zahrá savour much of the tales of fairy-land. Yet making due allowance for eastern hyperbole, there is no doubt that it must have been a wondrous place.

"Praise be to God," exclaims the Arab historian, "who allowed those contemptible creatures to design and build such enchanting palaces as these!" The palaces of Az-zahrá have crumbled into dust, and thus the works of man pass away, and the creations of his hand; the teeming earth and the azure sky alone remain unchanged.

Cordoba is now deserted and abandoned, not a trace exists of the city of Az-zahrá: the roses bloom unheeded on the slopes of the Sierra, and the country formed to be a paradise is left neglected by the hand of man; still, there are sounds of life and activity beginning to be heard around, and engineers may be seen at work preparing to lay down their iron roads to connect the cities of Cordoba and Seville. The whistle of the steam-engine will yet rouse the slumbering valleys, and the smoke of the locomotive curl in wreathed clouds over the plain.

The journey of twenty-four hours over the dreary and sandy road, which lies between Cordoba and Seville, will soon be shortened; but Ecija, the abode of many a proud and noble family, and Carmona, with its beautiful situation, and lofty tower, which aspires to imitate the Giralda, will no longer receive even a cursory visit, as the line of railway follows the course of the river, and reaches Seville by a speedier and more convenient route. Many a long day must elapse before we can dispense with the heavy lumbering diligence; we must still avail ourselves of it to return to the capital of Andalucia, whither we retraced our steps before bidding farewell to the Peninsula.

It is much to be regretted, that there should be so few attractions, in a social point of view, to induce foreigners to settle in Seville. The climate is charming, the city contains many interesting monuments, it is easy of access, the surrounding country is clothed with luxuriant vegetation, and is in many places picturesque; living, although much dearer than in other Spanish towns, is not expensive; but then, there is no society to lend its aid in making time pass agreeably, no libraries, no fresh supplies of books and publications to instruct or amuse the mind—none of those numerous resources which, not cities merely, but even provincial towns, might be expected to afford.

Spain has ever had for me a peculiar fascination. I dwelt with pleasure on the history of her people, and longed to visit the land over which such a halo of romance had been thrown. A residence in the country has in a great measure dispelled the vision in which imagination had indulged. I have found it neither so interesting as I pictured it, nor so common-place as some would make the world believe. Much as has been written of Spain, it is, with the exception of Seville and

Granada, in reality but little known and little visited; and yet, each of its provinces presents features of interest peculiar to itself. To the artist, it is a mine of wealth; to the general visitor, a land of many attractions, although, alas! of many discomforts also. To the passing traveller, it offers more charms than to the permanent resident; and when increased facilities exist of getting rapidly and with comfort through the Peninsula, it will afford temptations to the tourist of greater variety and novelty than any other country in Europe.

THE END.

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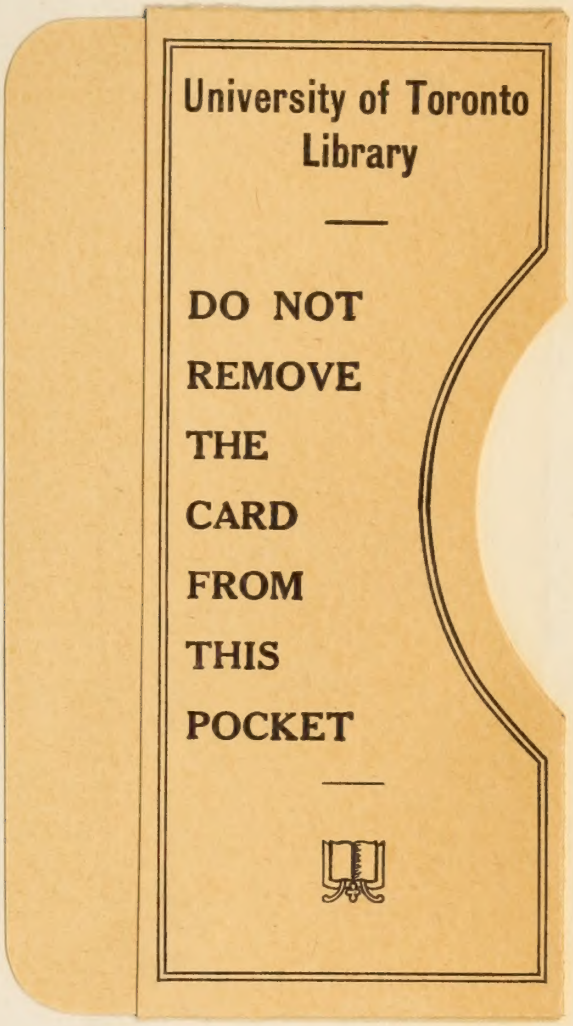

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